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ABSTRACT

This book-length report is the outgrowth of a fact-finding mission (in July and August 1990) from the Gannett Foundation to Central and Eastern Europe to assess the current state and probable future of press freedom there. The report investigates the condition and needs of the print and electronic media of four countries--Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. It explores the condition of media in the area, offers a country-by-country analysis, and lists the considerable efforts of others from the United States and Western Europe who are already there helping. Following an executive summary, an introduction dealing with the rebirth of free expression in Eastern Europe, and a summary discussing the media and people of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, the report is in four major sections on Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. Each section discusses the country in context, gives the task force report on that country's media as well as an overview of the media, and lists media contacts. Appendixes contain conclusions and recommendations of the task force, a select bibliography, a brief section on what Americans can learn from Eastern Europe, an inventory of western projects to aid Eastern European Media, and some views of "insiders" on Eastern Europe and the media. (SR)

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The foundation's two operating programs are the Gannett Foundation Media Center, the nation's leading institute for the advanced study of mass communication and technological change, at Columbia University in New York; and the Paul Miller Washington Reporting Fellowships in Washington, D.C.

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EMERGING VOICES: EAST EUROPEAN MEDIA IN TRANSITION

A Report of the Gannett Foundation
Task Force on Press Freedom in
Eastern Europe

By Everette E. Dennis and Jon Vanden Heuvel,
with the assistance of Jeremy King

Edited by Martha FitzSimon, Jeanne Sahadi
and Penny Panoulias, with special assistance from David Stebenne

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Forewords

The emerging freedom for people in Eastern Europe gives them a new outlook on life.

A free press, particularly, offers new hope and new horizons to East Europeans.

Optimism exists throughout the world for this region's new-found freedom in the media. But reality must not be overlooked. Many tough struggles lie ahead for East European media operating in their new environment.

In a monetary sense, this new free press is not free at all.

The economic realities of freedom in the media are dawning on East European journalists and their potential supporters around the world.

The Gannett Foundation trustees, interested in expanding their support of a free press worldwide, have begun by asking a simple question: What can we do to help?

This report offers a beginning point in assessing the problems, the opportunities and potential solutions toward helping create the free flow of information in Eastern Europe.

Allen H. Neuharth
Chairman
Gannett Foundation

This report signifies the Gannett Foundation's concern for one of the great press-freedom issues in the world today: that of the emerging media of Central and Eastern Europe.

In June 1990, the trustees of the Gannett Foundation mandated a fact-finding mission to that region to assess the current state and probable future of press freedom there.

Dr. Everette E. Dennis, a Gannett Foundation vice president and executive director of the Gannett Center for Media Studies, now the Gannett Foundation Media Center, organized a task force to investigate the condition and needs of the print and electronic media of four countries – Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia.

We wanted to learn whether and to what extent the Gannett Foundation and other media, philanthropic and government organizations could help foster a free and independent media in that region, which underwent such extraordinary changes in 1989 and 1990.

Dennis and his research assistants, Jon Vanden Heuvel and Jeremy King, witnessed a region where the press plays a larger-than-usual role in the society. They saw journalists engaged in reinventing their press and media system, not to mention their own roles as journalists.

The report, written by Dennis, Vanden Heuvel and King, explores the condition of media in the area, offers a country-by-country analysis, and lists the considerable efforts of others from the United States and Western Europe who are already there helping.

We hope this report will contribute to public understanding and inspire individuals and institutions to make a difference for freedom of the press in a part of the world so long deprived of such expression.

Charles L. Overby
President
Gannett Foundation

Executive Summary

Emerging Voices:
East European Media in Transition

A Report of the Gannett Foundation Task Force on Press Freedom in Eastern Europe

Background:

The Gannett Foundation organized a fact-finding mission to Eastern Europe to explore the current status and future prospects of press freedom in the region.

Countries Visited:

Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia, July and August 1990.

The Inquiry:

Background research, visits to government agencies, news organizations, universities, individual interviews with 125 individuals.

The Approach:

- An assessment of legal-constitutional issues affecting the media of the region; the economic environment, including the emergence of a market economy; and the quality of journalism, education and training issues.

Overall Findings:

The media system of the region is dynamic, but fragmented and contradictory. It is fragile and its needs, both material and psychological, are urgent.

- Each country has a profoundly unique character and culture, but all four nations have some media needs in common.
- New press laws are being written by parliaments, but hold little interest for journalists and media managers.
- The greatest needs for Western aid involve the market economy and privatization, as well as management training and expertise.
- Education and training efforts are in disarray, having broken down after Communist-oriented journalism schools at universities lost credibility. Journalists' associations, also important in training, are reorganizing.
- The quality of journalism is mixed, with some powerful and influential voices representing the best professional talent of each nation and producing vigorous, new papers.
- The press is mainly an advocacy press, still connected to governments and political parties or factions, rather than being truly independent.
- Broadcasting is under government control, but new governments are in power. The search for a model for state broadcasting is still underway.
- Independent broadcasting [illegible] a private-initiative basis is being considered, but is not yet well established.
- Various Western aid efforts are well-intentioned, but fragmented and inadequate to the many needs.

The Report:

A comprehensive look at the press and press systems of the four countries. The report includes the first-ever inventory of aid efforts to Eastern Europe that includes print, broadcasting, education and training from governmental and private sources; a study of

East Europe journalists, their perceptions of their press and its needs; a statement about what Westerners can learn from East European media ventures.

Findings by Country:

Poland

Legal Issues: A new law of communication, which may include provisions on foreign investment, is being drafted. Censorship and restrictions on press freedom have been abolished.

Business and Economics: Much hinges on the government's liquidation of RSW, the former Communist publishing monopoly. Many existing publications will be privatized or go out of business. Overhead costs for the print media are cripplingly high. Broadcasting, mainly under government control, desperately needs to attract Western capital.

Quality of Journalism: An open atmosphere of debate prevails with a plethora of new publications – more than 600 since Solidarity formed the government in 1989. Journalists tend to be partisan and often have difficulty separating opinion from fact. Journalism schools are discredited, but journalists' organizations are considering training programs.

Technology: Printing plants and newsroom technology are antiquated. Broadcast transmitters that could fully utilize Poland's broadcast spectrum are lacking. Some cable projects are underway.

Czechoslovakia

Legal Issues: The old press law has been amended and a new broadcasting law is being drafted. Would-be independent broadcasters await licenses. Press freedom is widely enjoyed.

Business and Economics: Privately owned media enterprises are relatively scarce. Scarcity and high cost of paper is a major obstacle. The broadcasting system, formerly dependent on government subsidies, has launched an austerity program.

Quality of Journalism: The tendency among journalists is to favor commentary over reportage, but there are several high-quality newspapers. There is little international coverage. Television programming is relatively underdeveloped. Charles University's journalism school has purged propaganda teachers and is developing a new Western-style curriculum.

Technology: Newsroom facilities are primitive by Western standards. Printing quality tends to be poor. Production facilities in Czechoslovak broadcasting have long been neglected.

Hungary

Legal Issues: Press and broadcasting enjoy openness, though partisan strife has retarded the development of new media laws which are still being debated in Parliament. Independent broadcasting is permitted, though there is a moratorium on frequency allocation.

Business and Economics: The media practices Western-style business, more than anywhere else in the former Eastern bloc. Advertising is common. Foreign investors have been particularly active.

Quality of Journalism: The press is bold and contentious and makes sharp attacks on political groups. A non-political tabloid style of press is gaining in popularity. Broadcasting is generally lively, featuring news programs and talk shows. Production of entertainment programs needs assistance. There are plans to start a journalism school in Budapest and expand a mass media program at the university in Pecs. Membership in the journalists' association is no longer required and the group suffers financially.

Technology: Newsroom technology is probably the best in Eastern Europe as foreign investors have introduced new equipment, including computers. Broadcast technology has been neglected for years, but is gradually being updated.

Yugoslavia

Legal Issues: Legal issues regarding the press have largely devolved into the hands of the individual republics. A federal press law may soon be passed. Broadcasting is also legally controlled by the separate republics. A law limiting foreign ownership is in draft form.

Business and Economics: Confusion regarding ownership, formerly in the hands of the government and party, has impeded foreign investment, although privatization is proceeding. Advertising as a source of revenue is well developed.

Quality of Journalism: Strident nationalism and ethnic chauvinism have tarnished Yugoslavia's once progressive press. Broadcasting similarly reflects regional biases. Most universities had some journalism education programs, which are now widely discredited.

Technology: The Yugoslav press has relatively good equipment and this is reflected in the quality of printing. Magazines are colorful and crisp. Most major publications have been able to buy Western technology.

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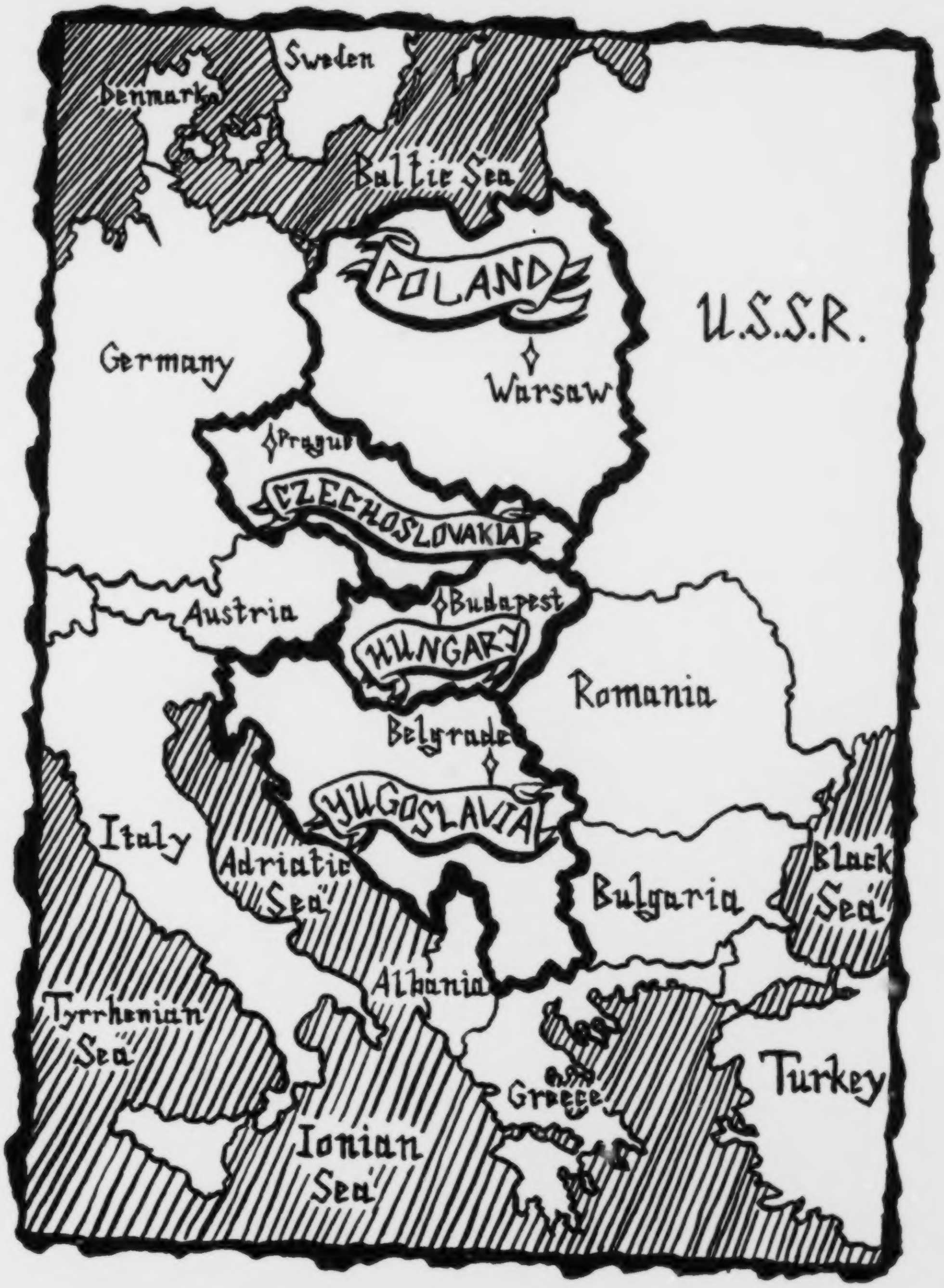
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Bulgaria
Black Sea
Albania
Tyrrhenian Sea
Turkey
Greece
Ionian Sea

Introduction:
The Rebirth of Free Expression in Eastern Europe

As political and social change swept across Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 and 1990, it became evident to most observers that an emerging free press was playing a large role in that process. Indeed, one of the central features of the Czechoslovak "Velvet Revolution" of 1989 and of the sharper-edged revolutions elsewhere was the movement of an underground media into full public view. Even the established media that were part of the old system, like state-owned broadcasting, hung the sign "under new management" at the front door and purged their top staff of old Communist Party apparatchiks.

The precise role of the print and electronic media in the rapid changes of the former Eastern bloc countries may be debated for years, but their overall importance and powerful impact is undisputed. The *samizdat* (underground) press was the thread that wove together the disparate social elements that arose in the quiet revolution that engulfed the region; and it was a source for political and governmental leadership as presidents, prime ministers and other top officials stepped forth from its ranks.

To be sure the new media were an agent of the several revolutions, but at the same time it was disillusionment both with the old media and the regimes they represented that fueled support for change. Within weeks, what had been a frayed and fragmented underground press proliferated into hundreds of weekly newspapers and magazines and scores of dailies. In Poland alone more than 600 newspapers were established after Solidarity came to power in 1989. Similar patterns were seen in other countries.

As this report is written, one finds a dynamic press and media system emerging in the several countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It is a system full of flux, full of contradictions. Without question new, independent media outlets are vibrant and they foster an extraordinary and multi-dimensional exchange of opinion and serve as a conduit for news and information. Even as they struggle to survive, parliamentarians are writing new press and broadcast laws to better reflect the altered communication environment. At the same time much of the old Communist Party and governmental press still exists.

In many instances it has simply changed its name while still associating with a newly-renamed, once-Communist party, now typically called "socialist." Still on the books are press laws enacted by previous regimes. Amid the vestiges of what was for so long the established order are Western capitalists eager to make investments in media properties even though it isn't clear who owns what or, ultimately, what the rules of a new market economy might be. Rudiments of the old command or state economic system are still in place.

One dramatic example of the imposition of the new on the old is the existence in several countries of independent non-governmental and non-party papers which still must negotiate with rigid and entrenched bureaucratic structures integral to the press and media system. For example, a typical newspaper or magazine under the old regimes was most often an editorial operation. It did not control printing or production facilities, nor did it distribute the finished product. Both printing and distribution were done under the purview of separate bureaucracies, coordinated, if at all, by the central government to which they all reported.

While the structure of state media enterprises was itself problem enough, it was the *content* of the Eastern bloc media that was increasingly objectionable to the people who eventually made or supported revolutions. In a world where it was not uncommon for an East German newspaper like *Neues Deutschland* to praise a local pretzel factory that exceeded its production quota, it could be said that the press was both trivializing and self-congratulatory. The same paper once ran no fewer than 48 flattering photographs of Communist Party chief Erich Honnecker on the same day!

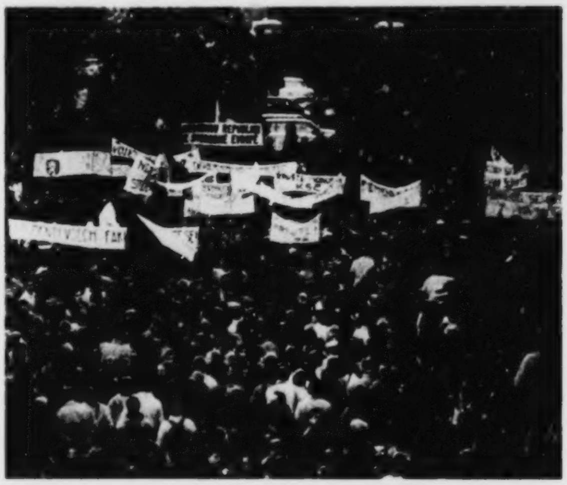
Historian Timothy Garton Ash, probably the West's greatest authority on contemporary Eastern Europe, calls 1989 "the year of truth." And we might add truth-seeking. Old media lost their credibility for good reason, as Garton Ash writes:

> The combination of censorship and a nearly complete party-state monopoly of the mass media provided the army of semantic occupation (of the public sphere); ideology, in the debased, routinized form of newspeak, was its ammunition. However, despised and incredible these structures of organized lying were, they still performed a vital blocking function. They no longer mobilized, but they did continue to prevent the public articulation of shared aspirations and common truths.

It was in 1989 that these structures of "organized lying" began to break down. The implicit bargain between the Communist regimes and their media failed, and new, noncompliant voices were actually saying so in print and over the air.

The centrality of the media not only as *agent* of revolution but as the *target* of revolution was richly illustrated in the cases of Czechoslovakia and Romania. In both instances, a facade of propaganda was lifted, even if for a fleeting moment. And with this stroke the genie came out of the bottle. During the student demonstrations in Prague's Wenceslaus Square in November 1989, the cameras of state television captured images of police brutalizing students. Though this extraordinary live coverage was quickly covered up by the old guard at television headquarters with a music video, the damage was already done. The same was true in a December rally in Bucharest when Nicolae Ceausescu was booed while addressing a crowd. The stunned look on his face captured as no critic could the vulnerability of this once-omnipotent dictator and tyrant.

Once the revolution came, among the first acts of new governments was to take over (they would say liberate) electronic media and open up the print press. Permitting free and eventually independent media was a vital beginning for democracy in several countries and a clear break with the past. The freeing up of the media system, speedily in some countries and incrementally in others, was the lifting of an ideological veil without saying just what would replace it.



It is the second half of the battle that Western democracies have pledged to assist. In announcing a U.S. effort to support the free press of Eastern Europe, Secretary of State James Baker in a February 1990 speech at Charles University in Prague said, "Just as you have won your own freedom, so too will well-informed citizens protect freedom by setting right to wrong." That, Baker said, meant establishing and maintaining a free and independent press, presumably in Western terms. "Our goal," he said, "is to support cooperative development of commercial and nonprofit radio and television broadcasting and a free press."

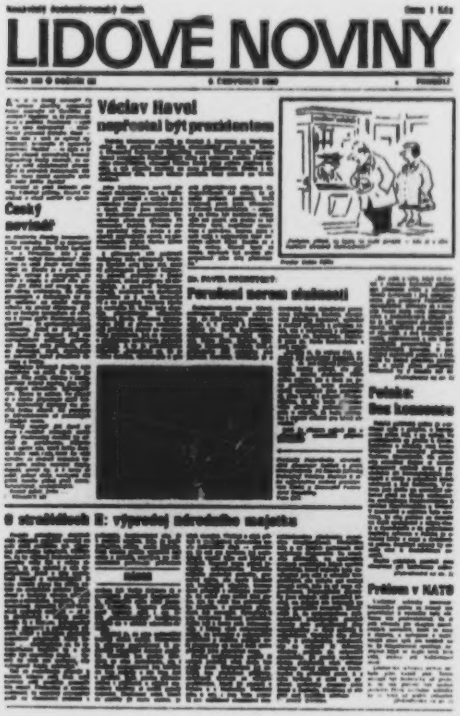
These barriers to efficient media notwithstanding, mass communication in the several countries of the region was reinventing itself. While grassroots newspapers and magazines struggled for survival, new press laws were being debated and enacted; elements of a market economy were coming into view; the media system itself and its role in the state and society were being redefined, as was the very nature of journalism and the job description of the journalist, who was no longer a propagandist for the state.

In this crazy-quilt media system it is important to recognize that there are differences and variations between and among the several countries, each of which has its own language differences and ethnic conflicts. And while we speak of the democratization of the the region generally and of the press particularly, it is clear that this press is really like none other in the world at the present time. There is an enthusiasm for the West and for Western values, particularly those of the United States and some countries of Western Europe, but there is also a desire to create a distinctive media system, one that reflects the needs of the people in each country. In large part, this press system as it now exists is an advocacy press. Most papers are identified with a particular party or faction, or with the new government. Some, such as those with foreign investors, have yet another identity, one that draws on Western business practices and sometimes journalistic styles while trying to fuse with the desires of local people, generally unused to this kind of communication.

The fact-finding mission that this report represents was by no means the first, nor will it be the last, in a region which has already experienced three waves of Western contact and interest in its media system.

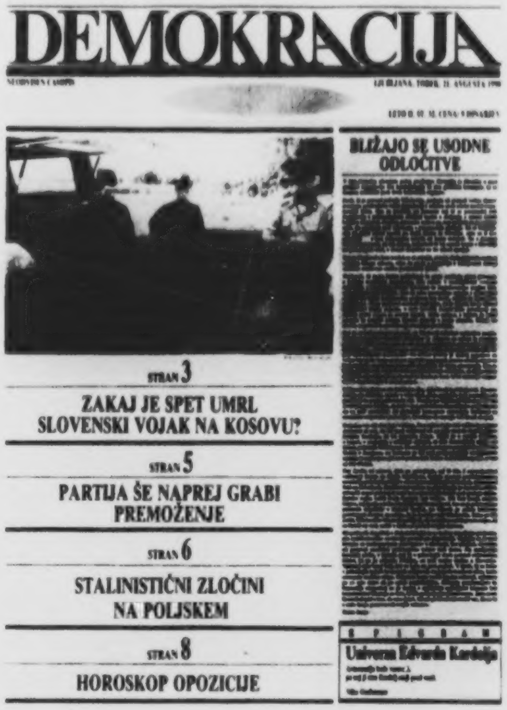
The first wave preceded the revolutions and involved Western support for the underground. Typically, small grants of money and equipment kept alive individuals and their papers, and with them other efforts to challenge official, governmental systems and to build a means of communication for the revolutions that would follow. Especially notable were the multifaceted efforts of the George Soros Foundation and the Charter 77 Foundation, as well as the U.S. government's National Endowment for Democracy. In the early days when being in the underground was risky and dangerous, these pioneering efforts were very important.

A second wave of Western support, both psychological and material, came after the revolutions as former underground papers and other new media emerged. A sprinkling of modest aid efforts, including some on-site training as well as funds for newsprint, presses and computers, accompanied various visits by Western observers from media groups and government agencies. While several U.S. organizations brought the equivalent of philanthropic support, a number of European interests came with foreign investment in



LIDOVÉ NOVINY

Václav Havel



DEMOKRACIJA

BLIŽAJO SE USODNE ODLOČITVE

STRAN 3

ZAKAJ JE SPET UMRL SLOVENSKI VOJAK NA KOSOVU?

STRAN 5

PARTIJA ŠE NAPREJ GRABI PREMOŽENJE

STRAN 6

STALINISTIČNI ZLOČINI NA POLJSKEM

STRAN 8

HOROSKOP OPOZICIJE

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mind. Each in its own way contributed to a fragile market media economy.

The third wave of activity and interest, of which this effort is a part, has often involved needs-assessment and fact-finding. Western observers from media, foundations and other organizations are making an effort to understand the range and scope of the problems of emerging media. This typically involves interviews with publishers, editors and broadcasters and has mainly been focused on the media themselves, rather than on support systems like new advertising venturers, universities or professional associations. Overviews of the legal-constitutional climate or economic trends have been examined less often.

Thus a veritable garden of free publications grew upon the compost of the old Communist media system. But the nascent independent press confronts a host of difficulties. As the countries of Central and Eastern Europe make the arduous transition from command to market economies, they are confronted with soaring newsprint prices, inadequate distribution systems, antiquated printing facilities that to a large extent remain under state control, and inexperienced business managers. Under the harsh light of a market economy, many of these seedling independent publications will wither.

Andrzej Osenka, the long-time editor of a Polish underground cultural journal, explained that as an underground editor he could rely somewhat on paper donations, on like-minded Poles' willingness to pay whatever price required for his publication, and on a network of underground idealists willing to distribute the journal for free. Now he faces exorbitant paper costs, he must price his journal in a competitive media market, and he must pay to have it distributed. "In many ways," he says, "the underground was a happy place."

In broadcasting, the scenario is somewhat different. New and for the most part democratic governments now control the bulk of East European broadcasting. There is widespread consensus on the need for a pluralistic broadcasting system. But how is this to be attained? The costs of establishing independent broadcasting systems, particularly in television, are prohibitive in the financially strapped East European economies.

A plethora of complicated legal and constitutional questions confront Eastern Europe's parliamentarians as well. Without independent broadcasters, governments ask whether the new democracies should privatize or partially privatize their state-owned broadcasting systems. And if they do, will this encourage foreign investors to purchase a controlling interest in their countries' airwaves? Of course it might be possible to establish pluralism within the basic structure of state-owned broadcasting systems. These are only a few examples that capture the tone and the context in which we conducted our fact-finding mission in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia. in the summer of 1990. We saw at once the euphoria of new-found freedom and at the same time heard concerns about the stability of the economic systems which must, in the end, support it. The East Europeans now face what British scholar Lawrence Freedman has aptly termed "the tunnel at the end of the light."

Solidarity leader Lech Walesa, left, meets with Everette E. Dennis, center, and Jon Vanden Heuvel at Solidarity headquarters in Gdansk, Poland.

It is this fragility that has so attracted Western observers who have expressed concern and support for the change. Still, much of this well-intentioned solidarity with the people of the region and their media has been mostly talk and is less often connected to actual resources. Our own conversations — nearly 125 of them over five weeks — made us cautious about Westerners over-promising or suggesting a flow of resources that might not come.

A needs-assessment that openly inquires about all needs — legal and constitutional as well as economic and material, not to mention education and training — runs the risk of promising too much by simply raising questions. In fact, we encountered several media leaders of the region who felt disillusioned and disappointed that the psychological support for them in the West had not been translated more quickly into financial help, equipment and personnel. We do not wish to contribute to their disillusionment with overzealous promises. By a careful examination of their needs, we hope to find ways to offer aid that will make a difference.

This Gannett Foundation fact-finding mission was the product of concern expressed by Foundation trustees, long-standing discussions by staff and fellows at the Gannett Center for Media Studies, and a directive by our Foundation chairman and president, who approved the mission we conducted in July and August of 1990.

Of the seven countries of the region most often thought of as an integral part of the "second world," we chose to visit Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia because the movements toward a free and independent media in these countries show the greatest promise of success and are most receptive to the kinds of aid the West can provide.

In the case of Poland, we found a vibrant press scene, but one rife with internecine conflicts and shaken by a highly unstable economic situation.

The movement toward openness in the Czechoslovak media, in many ways embodied by Vaclav Havel, was inspired by many of the ideals of liberty that guided our own founding fathers. Yet the hangover of 40 years of a Communist-controlled economy has stilted the development of independent media.

In Hungary, too, some vestiges of the old media order remain, but Hungarian media are more strikingly characterized by the gusto with which they have embraced Western-style capitalism. Much of the initial enthusiasm has now worn off and the Hungarians are now looking to establish legal and economic order that will firmly anchor a free media in Hungarian society.

Yugoslavia is a country often left out of Western aid programs because it was assumed for so long that it had already Westernized and left behind much of the Stalinist legacy that confronts the countries of Eastern Europe. In Yugoslavia, however, we experienced a media system with great potential but racked by ethnic rivalries and hostilities. We could not go everywhere and do everything in the short time we had, so we did not visit Bulgaria and Romania, although we did speak with journalistic and government leaders from these countries. It was our judgment that press freedom developments were not as mature there, although the need for assistance is incontrovertibly great. We omitted the German Democratic Republic from consideration because we believe that government and private resources will come from the newly reunified German state.

At the outset of this assignment we benefited by participating in a week-long East-West Journalists Conference in Prague, Czechoslovakia. There we met and interviewed journalists from several countries, listened to public discussions from media leaders of those countries, and experienced an interplay between them and some high-level and high-profile Western counterparts. We are grateful to Tom Winship and Bill Kovach and their respective organizations, the Center for Foreign Journalists and the Nieman Foundation, for including us in these discussions. These conversations were a fitting prelude to a more detailed investigation in the countries we visited.

Vaclav Havel addresses participants at the East-West Journalists Conference in Prague, Czechoslovakia.

While at the Prague conference and separate from this report, we completed a preliminary assessment of media needs that helped guide and inform this examination. This "pretest" is included here as Appendix B.

For the Gannett Foundation mission, we chose several broad arenas for investigation, including the legal/constitutional framework both past and present in the four countries. We also asked questions about the nature and shape of the newly emerging economies, which, while purporting to be capitalistic, still contain many traces of the old state-enterprise system.

At the same time we were concerned about the quality of newspaper journalism and broadcast programming in these countries. We also investigated the technical and physical condition of the media facilities. We had heard and read about the press and broadcasting enterprises, but wanted to see with our own eyes and talk with leadership and staff.

This also led to an inquiry about the education and training of journalists and media leaders, whether by journalist associations or state-run universities and journalism schools. Here the needs were not only for editorial training; training for business and management operations presented the greatest and most pressing need.

The media systems in Eastern Europe are not without significant international connections. The new media are not only attracting Western investors and other economic interests, but also ideological missionaries with their own agendas. Sometimes their interests have little to do with the needs or expressed desires of people in the targeted countries.

This feature of Western involvement, and the less-than-dormant forces of the old system, made us particularly wary as we tried to assess the condition of the fledgling media systems of the countries we visited. Our inquiry was not made to advance Western economic interests, which will pursue their targets effectively on their own; neither was it an advance to claim the spoils of the Cold War, as some organizations might do. Ours was a mission to consider impartially what we saw and heard, consult with the people of the region, and report our findings to our trustees and officers.

Naturally any inquiry of this kind has its limitations. We looked upon this assignment as one of specified duration; one that would attempt to document, to capture a "photograph in time" of the state and nature of the media of these four countries and of the region in the summer of 1990. Such a "photograph" is just that: a picture of the state of the press as we found it over a two-month period. No doubt some of the publications we observed will have died by the time this report is printed, but taken together the conditions we found, while ephemeral perhaps, are cues about the media system that will eventually endure.

While not unaware of all the intricacies of earlier developments, it was not our objective to write the history of these new media, but instead to understand their present dilemma, their problems and needs. Neither we nor other Western observers can hope to predict the immediate or long-range futures of countries and governments so recently installed, but we tried to catch the drift of the present situation, to assess with an eye toward reinforcing, supporting and exetending freedom of the press.

We had many helpers, including the many people in media organizations, governments, academic institutions and other entities in these countries, as well as interested individuals and institutions in the United States and Western Europe. We scoped out our mission and organized our report with respect to the many efforts now being organized and considered by other organizations. We are especially grateful to more than 125 persons we interviewed while in Central and Eastern Europe, but especially to several individuals who not only gave us their time, but also helped connect us with others: Maciej Strzembosz of Polish Television and the *Cracow Times;* Petr Pajas of Charter 77 Foundation in Prague; Janos Horvat of Hungarian Television; and Bruce Koch and Barry Levin of the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade. We also included in this report a selected inventory of some of these activities now underway (please see Appendix A).

There is more than enough room for many helping hands, for collaborative partnerships between press freedom interests in the West and those in Central and Eastern Europe. However, recognizing that there are many present and planned efforts in the region — some of them substantial and long-term, others quite ephemeral — any new ventures ought to be thoughtfully directed. They should take into account the flow of limited resources into a region where huge financial resources will eventually be required to secure and support a free and independent press.

Summary

The Nations of Central and Eastern Europe: Their Media and People

Legal Structure

In Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia press and broadcasting laws are in the process of being rewritten by parliamentarians. All the drafts under debate embrace freedom of the press, but most go well beyond the American First Amendment in specifying journalists' responsibilities and setting limits to foreign ownership of the press. While a great deal of latitude is envisioned for the printed press, guarantees extended to the broadcast media, which are to remain a state enterprise, are not as generous.

Parliamentary debates on press and broadcasting laws have often been featured on television and have been widely covered by newspapers and other periodicals, but we found little interest in them among practicing journalists. Most knew about the newly proposed laws, but few thought they were particularly important or relevant to their profession.

This lack of interest probably has its roots in the fact that the rule of law is virtually unknown in these countries. As one journalist put it, "We'll have to see this [the new press law] work to believe that it is true." Raw political power, and not freshly printed statutes, will be the decisive factor in determining how much freedom the media have.

Economics of the Media

The attempt to transform a command economy into a market one is putting a severe financial strain on East European media enterprises, both private and state-owned. Some newly established newspapers and magazines are strictly private businesses; some are in a limbo-like condition between state ownership and privatization; others remain firmly in state hands. Often it is unclear just who owns what. State-owned enterprises face the probability of cuts in government subsidies and the necessity of cutting deeply into grossly bloated staffs. Private press ventures, although unburdened with a Communist institutional past, must still face escalating costs, a crowded media market and declining circulations.

In most instances, old state-run printing and distribution systems still predominate in each country. Newspapers get a large portion of their revenues from newsstand sales and a small but growing portion from advertising. Most television channels in the region now carry commercials, but state subsidies and a tax on television usage still account for most income.

Foreign investment is much talked about and in evidence: Western entrepreneurs such as Robert Maxwell, Axel Springer and Rupert Murdoch have invested in newspapers and magazines. Foreign media moguls have also tried to invest in state-owned broadcast properties, but with no success to date. Rules for foreign investment are not yet established, and all countries lack the coherent contract and property laws that are essential to a market economy.

Quality of Journalism

Much of the printed press practices advocacy journalism, blurring reportage and opinion. Quality is generally quite low, both in terms of physical appearance, writing, scope of coverage and orientation to readers' needs.

Most papers emphasize political and governmental news, much of it biased to a particular party view, and devote little attention to news of the economy and important institutions. Exceptions to this rule exist, and a few papers and magazines try to match West European and American standards.

In virtually every country, one or more of the leading papers reflects the voice of the government, while other papers speak for specific factions, nationalities or other interests. The old Communist Party press is faltering, but still very much in evidence, particularly outside the major cities. International coverage is sparse in all the media.

Education and Training of Journalists and Media Leaders

Almost everyone interviewed expressed the view that education and training were badly needed, particularly as concerns how to operate a media enterprise in a market economy. Basic skills such as personnel management, marketing and cost-accounting are largely unknown. Under the old regimes, most journalists were educated at universities or journalists' associations, where they received a heavy dose of Marxist-Leninist theory but little of practical value. Many of these educational programs are still operating, but are now badly discredited in the eyes of their clientele. Media people express grave doubts about the value of formal journalism education, and prefer to employ graduates educated more generally in the liberal arts and sciences.

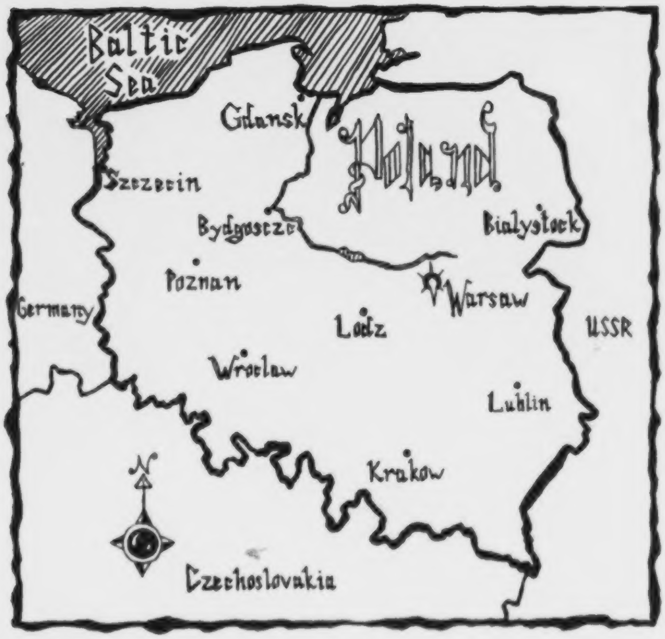
Some schools have purged teachers with Communist ties, but others have not. Journalists' associations are split between old and new factions and over their own probable futures. Western training and instruction are welcomed, but many think they would be best channeled through media enterprises rather than through universities or professional associations. If such attitudes are to change, the old schools will have to reform themselves.

Technology

The scarcity of hard currency, required to purchase modern Western equipment, has caused the print and broadcast media to operate with mostly obsolete physical plants. Newspapers that existed under the Communist regime are reasonably well outfitted, but many new, privately owned newspapers and magazines lack everything from laptop computers and photo scanners to copy machines and tape recorders. Printing facilities everywhere are generally inadequate.

Broadcasting faces many of the same problems that confront the print media. For many start-up operations, broadcasting equipment is prohibitively expensive. State broadcasters operate equipment that has suffered years of neglect; production facilities are especially outdated. Broadcasters have been shut out of Western markets for so long that they often do not know what is available or what they need.

Poland


Baltic Sea
Gdansk
Poland
Szczecin
Bydgoszcz
Bialystock
Poznan
Warsaw
Germany
Lodz
USSR
Wroclaw
Lublin
N
Krakow
Czechoslovakia

Poland

Population: 35,383,000

Area: 312,354 sq.km. (120,569 sq.mi.)

GNP: 3.09 trillion zloty (US $108.3 billion)

Literacy Rate: 98%

Language: Polish

Currency: The zloty

Poland:

In Context

Of the four countries examined in this study, Poland is the largest in both population and area, with 38 million people and over 120,000 square miles. Yet only 80 years ago it did not exist at all.

Politically, Poland's geography has been a mixed blessing. A fertile land with a long Baltic coastline, Poland is wedged between two powerful and historically aggressive neighbors, Germany to the west and Russia to the east. While the Germans and Russians were enhancing their armies and enriching their governments during the 17th and 18th centuries, the Poles remained an isolated, predominantly agricultural people who developed little industry. As the Enlightenment swept through Europe, the rural Poles became more devoutly Roman Catholic than ever. And when the Protestant Germans and the Eastern Orthodox Russians went to war, they frequently fought on the Catholic turf of the Poles. For this reason, Norman Davies, a historian of Poland, has referred to this country as "God's playground."

But not all of Poland's tragic political history is attributable to geography. From the 14th through the 16th century, Poland was ruled by strong monarchies. Under the Jagellonian dynasty, Polish cities thrived as members of the commercial Hanseatic League. Cracow, then the Polish capital, became a center of humanistic learning. But after the Jagellon line died out in 1572, Poland experienced several centuries of political confusion. An elective kingship was established, but it resulted in chaos. The Polish practice of dividing up an estate among all noble sons — as opposed to the English practice of passing the estate on to the eldest son — led to an overabundance of impoverished nobles from which no great aristocratic families emerged.

By the 18th century Poland was in serious disarray and became easy prey for Europe's rapacious monarchs. Frederick the Great of Prussia, Catherine the Great of Russia and Maria Theresa of Austria divided the Polish territory among themselves, and by the 19th century Poland had disappeared from the map, its people subjects of the Germans, Russians and Austrians. Yet although the Polish people had no "state" during the 1800s, their patriotism never diminished. The spirit of the time survives to this day through the poems of Adam Mickiewicz and the mazurkas of Frederic Chopin.

Like the modern Czechoslovak, Hungarian and Yugoslav states, modern Poland was created at the Peace Conference of Versailles in 1918, still bearing the physical and political scars of so many years under foreign domination. In Warsaw, the new capital, the Russians had erected monuments to the Tsars. In Poznan and Gdansk, some 150 miles to the west and the north respectively, buildings resembled structures in Hamburg. And the Poles, inexperienced in governing themselves, were unable to establish a stable democracy.

There is no darker chapter in 20th-century history than that of World War II Poland. In late August 1939, Hitler and Stalin signed their diabolical Non-Aggression Pact, and on September 1, 1939, Nazi troops stormed across Poland's western border. A few weeks later, Soviet armies marched into Eastern Poland, and once again this hapless nation was divided between Germans and Russians.

Six million Poles died during the Nazi occupation, half of them Jews killed in concentration camps. When the Soviets again invaded Poland in 1944, the

Germans they drove out laid waste to much of the country and almost completely destroyed Warsaw. The Soviet occupation of Poland led to the establishment of a Stalinist-style government, and once again the Poles were subject to foreign tyranny.

But Communism never took root in the hearts of the Polish people. The official atheism of the Communist state could not survive in a country where the people practiced Catholicism with such passion and fervor. The successive Communist governments of Wladislaw Gomulka and Edward Gierek promised the Poles a better life, but the people watched with somber cynicism as one ill-begotten economic plan after another drove the country toward poverty. In 1980, an economic depression spawned popular unrest and workers' strikes throughout the country. This led to the formation of Eastern Europe's first independent trade union, Solidarnosc [Solidarity], headed by a charismatic Gdansk shipyard worker named Lech Walesa.

In 1981 the Communist regime declared martial law and arrested Walesa and other dissident leaders. Solidarity went underground, and until the volatile situation was quelled by General Jaruzelski, another Soviet invasion seemed imminent. But while the government had temporarily stifled civil disobedience, it could never capture the hearts and minds of a people now devoted to a man in Rome: John Paul II, the first Polish Pope in history.

Pope John Paul II saw the Iron Curtain as a scar across Europe. He made it his mission to restore unity to Christian Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. In numerous trips to his native Poland during the 1980s, the Pope was morally and politically invincible. His sermons were officially censored in the press and on the airwaves, yet all of Poland knew what he said. Jaruzelski, it seemed, headed a government without a people.

When popular pressure for the legalization of Solidarity became overwhelming and Gorbachev made it clear that he would not interfere, the union was once again permitted to operate openly. Walesa was invited to the government's negotiating table and plans for elections were drawn up. The results of these elections were in many ways a foregone conclusion, and Solidarity candidates won by a landslide at every level. In August 1989, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the former editor of *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* [Solidarity Weekly] and Lech Walesa's hand-picked candidate for the prime minister's job, formed the first non-Communist government in Eastern Europe since the Second World War.

With the victory over the common enemy won, cracks and fissures began to appear in the unity that had once characterized the Solidarity movement. Mazowiecki was establishing policies of which Walesa, a man without an official post, disapproved. Adam Michnik, Walesa's choice to edit the influential *Gazeta Wyborcza*, roundly criticized Walesa. When Walesa tried to have Michnik removed, he failed. Some Solidarity members found Walesa's methods too heavy-handed and transferred their support to Michnik, the parliamentarian Bronislaw Geremek, his ally, and Mazowiecki's policies in general. Others rallied around their hero Walesa, expressing their feelings for him as well as bitter opposition to Michnik and Geremek in *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*.

This falling out may have laid the foundation for political pluralism in Poland. The Walesa camp, proposing its leader for the president of Poland, has taken to calling itself the Center Alliance, while the Michnik/Geremek wing is known by the acronym ROAD. A two-party system may very well be in the works. The irony of this divergence is that Walesa, Mazowiecki, Michnik and Geremek once fought the good fight side by side and suffered together for their cause in prison.

The splintering of Poland's media has mirrored that of its leaders. The Walesa camp recently forced *Gazeta Wyborcza* to remove the Solidarity logo from its masthead, an action symbolizing the depth of the rift between the two factions. Will the Polish polity develop a stable pluralism and institute healthy economic reforms? Or will the fractiousness that has plagued the Polish people for centuries deter Poland's current efforts to rescue itself from economic disintegration? The answer remains to be seen.

The Task Force Report on Polish Media

Legal Structure and Legal Developments

As in all the countries we visited, the Poles were generally satisfied with the government's present policies toward the media. No one complained about legal restrictions on freedom of expression. All agreed that new laws on the press and broadcasting needed to be written, but nobody seemed terribly anxious about it. The Polish Parliament, after all, has a backlog of about 200 laws that need amending. A new Law of Communication is apparently being drafted, but none of the media people with whom we spoke were following the progress of this law with any great attention. The main focus of concern is on economic obstacles that may present a barrier to a fully free and independent press.

In Poland, events have far outpaced the legislative efforts of the Polish government and Parliament. Censorship, for instance, broke down long before the Polish Parliament got around to abolishing it officially. Independent broadcasters are beginning to crop up, though it will probably be months before the Parliament actually proclaims such ventures legal. Poles' perceptions, like those of other East Europeans, are that the actual power relations in the country are much more important in ensuring freedom of the press than any legal guarantees.

Press Law

The Communist regime in Poland operated under a press law that was written in 1938, 10 years before the Communists seized power. This old law provided for censorship, had strict libel laws, and forbade criticism of the government. Thus the Communists found that the old law, with a bit of tailoring, was well suited to their own purposes. After the Solidarity-led coalition came to power in fall 1989, components of the old press law, most importantly censorship, were disposed of in piecemeal fashion. A new law that will completely supplant the old law is in the works.

Libel law is a sticky matter. The Polish press has recently been rife with personal attacks, especially between the Walesa wing of Solidarity and the Warsaw group centered around Adam Michnik at *Gazeta Wyborcza*. After years of bland press extolling the virtues of socialism and the fulfillment of five-year plans, the Poles are not used to newspaper articles in which individuals are personally attacked. They tend to perceive such articles as uncivil and even harmful. At the same time many recognize that the old libel law was used by the Communist government to stifle criticism of its policies, and that a healthy public debate on the issues of the day might require some personal attacks, even if venomous and bruising. The question at hand is just how far these attacks should be allowed to go.

The second problem that any libel law will have to address is whether the author of a libelous article or the editor of the newspaper that ran the article will be held responsible. The Poles will also probably enact some legislation restricting journalism that is considered contrary to the national interest. Irresponsible writings on German unification, ethnic minorities or the Jews have great inflammatory potential here.

Broadcasting Law

As in all East European countries under Communist rule, Polish broadcasting was in the hands of the government. Unlike the printed press, which has a tradition of freedom and independence, the Poles have never known a television that was not state controlled: From the time television arrived in Poland in the 1950s, it was a branch of the government.

There may have been a handful of independent radio broadcasters in the 1920s and 1930s, but radio as well as television has traditionally been the business of state bureaucrats, not private entrepreneurs. Because this centralized broadcasting system will require extensive dismantling, there are more barriers to a free and independent broadcasting system than in the case of the print media.

Today the state operates two national television channels and four principal national radio stations. They are controlled by the Committee for Radio and Television, a body created in about 1960. In addition, there are eight regional television stations, which are fairly closely managed by the central authorities.

There is much talk of establishing an independent third television channel, but thus far nothing has come of it. Solidarity would very much like to establish such a third channel, but the costs are prohibitive. There are also some reports that the second channel might be privatized and go commercial, but such a move, if it ever takes place, is probably years away. Radio Solidarity, which began broadcasting out of Warsaw last year, represents Poland's first independent radio station and hopes to expand by setting up a station in Poznan next year. A large number of would-be independent broadcasters, long on enthusiasm but short on money, have been applying to the Solidarity organization for funding.

A law that dictates that all transmitters must be owned by the state is still on the books. Any nongovernmental broadcaster would have to rent the transmitter from the state. This was typical of old Communist strategies for smothering any independent media. The regime never needed to ban independent broadcasting, because it could simply tell any applicant that no transmitters were available for rent at that particular time.

In Wroclaw, there is now a local television broadcaster called TV Echo that is a very local affair and quite amateurish. It transmits to a very limited audience using a privately owned transmitter; so far the authorities have left it alone.

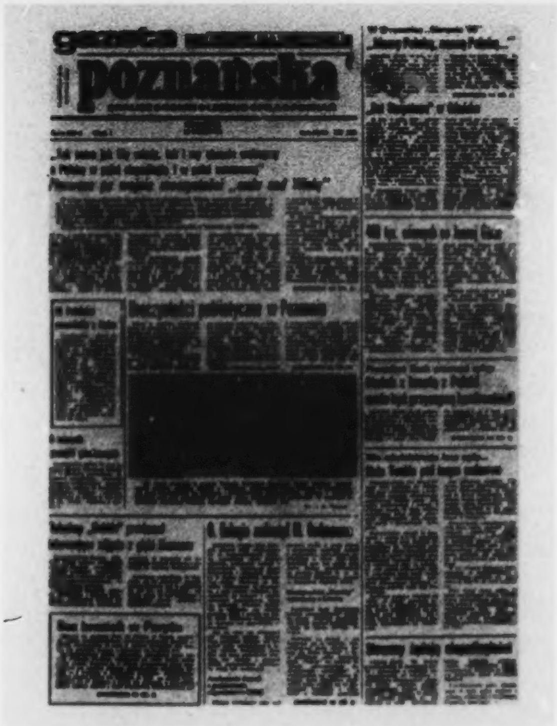
There are plans for a private religious station in Cracow. The Polish authorities have also made an allowance for Radio Malopolska Fun in Cracow, a private broadcaster transmitting programming beamed from France via satellite. These are examples of how, in these rapidly changing times, the actual media scene does not correspond to existing media laws.

Frequency allocation, another gray area, is handled by the Ministry of Communications. In Eastern Europe, another method of stunting the development of independent broadcasting was for the government to claim that there were simply not enough open frequencies for independent broadcasters. Certainly the spectrum is very limited in Eastern Europe, but it is adequate to accommodate a substantial number of newcomers.

In Poland, spectrum shortage presents no major problem. The Polish Ministry of Communications will have to develop a set of FCC-type rules in the coming years to handle frequency allocation in an open media market. Another matter for the Polish Parliament to address will be the degree to which the Ministry of Communications should be separate and independent from the government. There have been frequent complaints over the last few months that the state-owned media are behaving like handmaidens to the government, denying opposition groups access to broadcasting facilities. Two bills are before the Parliament, one providing for direct parliamentary oversight over broadcasting, the other calling for the establishment of an FCC-like National Broadcasting Council that would grant licenses, assign frequencies and regulate the airwaves.

Foreign Ownership

The real problem with foreign investment and potential ownership is that it happened before anyone thought about it or developed a coherent policy. Whether foreign owners should be able to control a news organization is a matter of considerable controversy as is the degree to which they bring values and practices not a part of the local culture. On the other hand, many argue that publications that have attracted foreign investment in Hungary are among the best. Poles with whom we talked expressed concern over what they regarded as Hungarian "mistakes" which ranged from accepting foreign investment to not extracting a higher



gazeta poznańska

KTO SIĘ BOI BUJAKA

SIMONIDES KONTRA KRÓL

Z LUKREM OSZCZĘDNEJ

ZSRR - POZORNY SPOKÓJ

DZIENNIKARZE DO ŁOPATY

price. To date in this ambivalant atmosphere, foreign investors have largely been held at bay in Poland.

A French entrepreneur is rumored to have about $50 million that he would like to invest in a joint-venture television channel with the Poles. It is not clear whether such a venture would be legal; although not constitutionally prohibited, it might become illegal before long because the draft communications law has various versions that limit foreign ownership of broadcasting properties. One version might limit foreign ownership to 20 percent. Another version might allow 40 percent foreign ownership, but will perhaps attach a proviso stipulating that 90 percent of the actual television programming must be Polish.

Media entrepreneurs Silvio Berlusconi and Robert Maxwell both made overtures to the government for control of one or both national channels and were turned down. David Chase, owner of Chase Enterprises, seems to be the only American investing significantly in East European media ventures at all. He has signed a joint-venture agreement with the Polish government to construct a cable system there; he will own 70 percent.

There is general agreement that the big newspapers should remain in Polish hands, though this has not yet been decreed by law. The Warsaw daily *Zycie Warszawy,* for instance, is an enticing media property, but it is doubtful that the Poles will let it fall into foreign ownership.

Foreign buyers for the smaller papers are not perceived as a threat. The French company L'Expansion invested in *Gazeta Bankowa,* the first joint venture in the Polish media, and Hersant is looking for some form of cooperation with the financially strapped government daily *Rzeczpospolita.* Maxwell and Murdoch are said to be watching Poland as a possible market. There has been some discussion of foreign investors establishing a central printing plant that could print several newspapers on a contract basis.

Independent Press

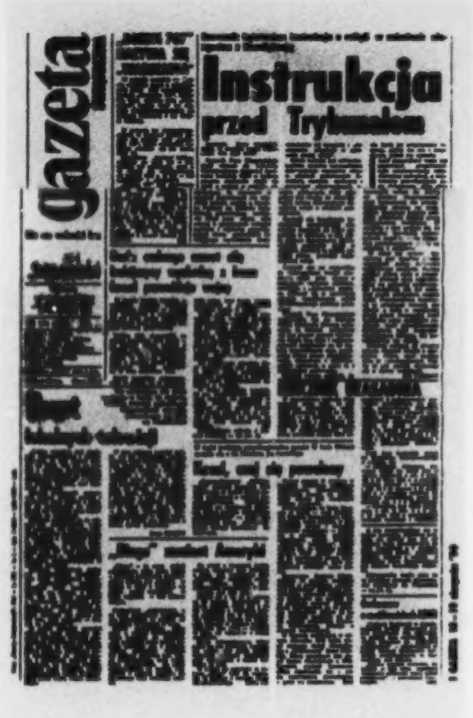
We often heard it said that the Polish press is now pluralistic, but not really independent. A large number of Poles continue to see the press as a political organ. It is widely believed that each party or faction must have a newspaper as its mouthpiece, and that every newspaper must have some affiliation with a party or faction. Newspapers with no party connection —that faithfully report the news without giving it their own particular ideological "spin" — are a new concept in Poland and are only slowly beginning to take root. Poland has yet to develop a quality daily that is at least nominally independent of all political and social forces and available throughout the country.

It is impossible to understand the extent of and the difficulties associated with press independence without a prefatory explanation about the liquidation of the RSW and its holdings. The RSW was a large government organization that published virtually every newspaper in Poland under the Communists. Now the RSW is in the process of being liquidated; its newspapers are being privatized, auctioned off or shut down. Typically, the RSW will offer the workers at the newspaper the chance to buy out the paper. If there is no interest in this, the paper is then put on the auction block: This is where foreign investors have a chance to buy into the Polish media. If there is little interest in the paper, it will be shut down, according to the mechanism established.

The problem with this approach is that shutting down the unprofitable newspapers will put thousands of Polish journalists and newspaper employees out of work. The RSW liquidation process, headed by a man named Jerzy Drygalski, had been marred by a struggle between those who want to keep the maximum number of journalists employed and those who insist that any paper that survives must be economically viable. The conflicts that have arisen between these two groups have brought the RSW liquidation to a halt. In turn, this has led to accusations that the RSW has no intention of auctioning itself out of existence. Maciej Ilowiecki, now chairman of the Association of Polish Journalists, charged in January that the RSW was not being transformed; rather, "it is only changing its skin."

Another conflict related to press independence has also wracked the liquidation process. Political groups, most notably ROAD and the Center Alliance, which formerly made up Solidarity, claim that certain crucial newspapers ought to be set aside for them in order that one faction not have an unfair press advantage over the other. The notion that these former RSW newspapers ought to go to independent editors and publishers without affiliations with either ROAD or the Center Alliance is quite alien to most Poles.

Thus there is a possibility that the former Communist-controlled press will not become an independent press at all, but rather a press controlled by two new political parties. When Kasimierz Woycicki, a friend of Prime Minster Mazowiecki, was given the editorship of the influential *Zycie Warszawy*, a cry of protest arose from the camp of the oppositional faction Center Alliance. The Center Alliance has demanded that RSW compensate by handing over *Express*, a tabloid-style former Communist daily based in Warsaw.



gazeta

Instrukcja

przed

Because it is economically difficult to start a new newspaper from scratch in an already overcrowded newspaper market, political groupings have tried for the most part to gain control of newspapers already in existence. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the heralded Warsaw daily established by Solidarity in 1989, has more or less committed itself to supporting ROAD. *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, a Solidarity weekly, has thrown in its lot with Lech Walesa's Center Alliance. In the countryside, various Civic Committees established last year by Lech Walesa have tried to strong-arm the local press into supporting and propagating their political views.

Rzeczpospolita, a government-owned daily that has traditionally functioned as an official paper, has managed to stay above the fray between ROAD and the Center Alliance. But because it is government-owned there will always be some limits to *Rzeczpospolita's* editorial freedom. Woycicki has tried to maintain an independent line for *Zycie Warszawy,* but it remains to be seen whether he succeeds, beholden as he is to the government.

A few new newspaper start-ups show promise of becoming truly independent papers. *Czas* (the Cracow Times) is a new paper, or actually a reincarnation of a newspaper that was published before the Communist takeover. It is privately owned and has tried to stay outside both the ROAD and Center Alliance camps. The same can be said for *Gazeta Gdanska*, a new Gdansk daily. Its editors say they will revive the tradition of the paper published under that name from 1891 to 1939. *PWA* (Prezglad Wiadomosci Agencyjnych) is a new, limited circulation newspaper based in Warsaw that holds to an independent line.

Press independence in Poland remains tenuous because of the long tradition of a party-affiliated press, the precarious economic climate that has driven some papers to seek the shelter of large political organizations, and because printing is still largely in the hands of the RSW. But small independent papers have sprung up in provincial cities like Konin, Gora, Bialystok and Opole. They are often published by amateur printers and sold outside churches. The Catholic Church, one of the most powerful organizations in Poland, publishes newspapers that are usually independent of state or party control. *Tygodnik Powszechny,* a Catholic weekly based in Cracow, has played a very important role as a member of the Polish press over the past 40 years.

Business and Economics of the Media

Ownership

Obviously the whole question of press ownership will depend on how the RSW liquidation is handled. At the moment, the government or the RSW Liquidation Committee still holds the titles to the publications. Even in the case of *Zycie Warszawy,* the editorship of which was given to Kazimierz Woycicki, the details of ownership have not been worked out. The Solidarity Foundation, which is nonprofit but close to the Center Alliance, would like to buy out some old Communist publications whenever the RSW auctions get rolling, but they are not sure that they will have sufficient funds and are hoping for some Western donations. The authorities have yet to iron out whether or not Western buyers will be welcome at the RSW auctions.

There is a handful of papers with a Western-style ownership structure. *Gazeta Gdanska* is owned by a prosperous cucumber exporter. *Czas* is run like a joint stock company but was founded with seed money from a French aristocrat. *Gazeta Wyborcza* is owned by 19 stockholders, 17 of whom work at the newspaper. There are a few other examples of Western-style ownership structures at other small publications.

In broadcasting, ownership is still the province of the state, apart from a few isolated examples. Radio Solidarity is privately owned and got its start-up money from the Solidarity Foundation. Managers at Radio Solidarity said that it costs about $100,000 to start up a radio station covering the Warsaw area. TV Echo allegedly has some foreign owners, though this is not yet fully legal.

Jan Kubiak, the manager of the regional television station in Poznan, one of eight such regional state-owned stations, said that there are plans afoot to partly privatize the station, but he does not know how long it might take before the legal environment would permit that. The head of the Polish Radio and Television Committee, Adrzej Drawicz, wants to decentralize the television system. Whether he would allow the stations to privatize is another question. The lower-level bureaucrats on the Committee are less than enthusiastic about new television ventures and would certainly oppose that step.

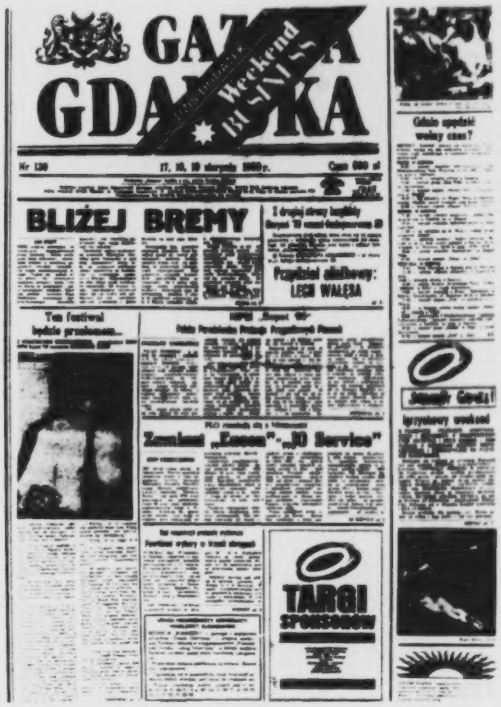
Printing

In 1948 the Communist Party closed down all private publishing houses. But the Poles have been ambitious in starting up new publishing ventures. Adam Michnik, the editor of *Gazeta Wyborcza,* and the filmmaker Andrzej Wajda own a publishing house called Agora; it publishes *Gazeta Wyborcza.* The French newspaper *Le Monde* donated its old press to Agora in 1989 when it modernized its facilities. Slawomir Sivek of the Solidarity Foundation says that his organization also has plans to open a publishing house.

Most of the large old newspapers owned by the RSW had their own small printing plants. The separation of editor and publisher has never been well defined in Poland. At *Zycie Warszawy,* for instance, Kazamierz

Woycicki showed us the antiquated printing facilities in the basement of the newspaper headquarters. Woycicki, recently appointed *Zycie Warszawy's* editor, has little say over what happens in this printing plant because it is still in the RSW's hands. It remains uncertain whether the liquidation of the RSW will mean that the roles of editor and publisher will become separate and distinct.

Printing is extremely expensive in Poland right now. The boom in the number of publications has put a strain on the country's outdated facilities, and now that they are operating under market principles Polish printers are able to charge high prices for their services. The new independent newspaper *Gazeta Gdanska*, for instance, has to survive on limited resources until it can build up its readership. Thus it cannot pay the local printer as much as the Communist newspaper can, the latter having considerable party funds at its disposal. By the time *Gazeta Gdanska* gets off the press it is often already noon, and most people in Gdansk have bought their daily newspapers — often the Communist paper, which is, after all, available. Thus *Gazeta Gdanska* is stuck in a catch-22 situation in which it must earn more money in order to pay the printer for a higher priority on the press, but it can't earn more until it is able to sell more newspapers by coming out earlier in the day. For weeklies and journals, the high cost of printing has forced them to raise their sales price; this in turn hurts readership in a time of economic depression.


GDA KA

Weekend

BLIŻEJ BREMY

LECH WAŁĘSA

TARGI

Newsprint is also expensive, its price having skyrocketed since Poland launched its economic reform program early this year. It is generally of low quality, unless imported from Finland at even higher prices. But newsprint is still more available here than in Czechoslovakia, so while it drives up costs it is not in such short supply that it forces papers to limit their press runs. All commodities in Poland have encountered cost increases since the economic restructuring began, but newspapering has been harder hit than other sectors of the economy.

Distribution

The distribution system is still controlled by the state. The state-owned RUCH chain of kiosks, which is a part of the larger RSW conglomerate, is the primary distributor of newspapers. RUCH no longer restricts its sales to Communist papers, but it is an inefficient system that makes national distribution particularly difficult. Konrad Napierala, the editor of *Gazeta Poznanska*, an independent newspaper, said that 95 percent of his distribution is still handled by RUCH. He said that he is sure he could sell more newspapers if he had access to a better distribution system. Often, he said, he sends workers at the paper who are not busy out in their cars to peddle the newspaper.

Piotr Aleksandrowicz of *Rzeczpospolita* said that his paper is spared much of these distribution headaches because it is the government newspaper and so has a subscription system that delivers the papers to major libraries, businesses and other institutions and organizations. This, he said, accounts for about 80 percent of the paper's sales; but this is a unique situation in Poland that other papers could not hope for. In fact, with the high rate of inflation in Poland today, subscriptions would probably be an imprudent business deal for the newspapers.

Aleksandrowicz felt that RUCH could be improved into a decent distribution service, though RUCH's fate is uncertain. It will clearly be separated from the RSW publishing giant. It may then be nationalized, divided into workers' cooperatives, or transformed into a company whose major shareholder will be the state.

Other newspapers — *Gazeta Wyborcza*, for instance — have little hope that RUCH will ever become an adequate distribution system. They have drawn up plans to set up an independent distribution system in which *Gazeta Wyborcza* will operate its own kiosks, financing the sale of its newspaper by selling other commodities and charging other organizations a fee for distributing their publications in the kiosks. Others expressed an interest in an independent distribution system, but the plans are only in an embryonic stage. The *Financial Times* of Great Britain, fed up with Polish distribution, has also begun to set up its own distribution system.

Readership

The economic slump has badly hurt newspaper readership. After the economic reforms were initiated in January, sales generally plummeted. People were used to artificially low prices, and have not mentally adjusted to the notion of paying market prices for this commodity. Warsaw's *Tygodnik Soliarnosc* (Solidarity Weekly) saw its sales plunge from 280,000 to 120,000. Many people also began to forgo the daily paper and to limit themselves to buying only the weekend editions. *Zycie Warszawy,* for example, sells 180,000 daily copies and 250,000 of its weekend edition. The Cracow paper *Czas* sells 30,000 daily copies and 90,000 of its weekend edition. The circulation of the old Communist daily, *Trybuna Ludu* (now known as *Trybuna*), has fallen through the floor; this summer it was selling only about 8,000 copies daily in Warsaw. *Polityka,* a weekly connected with the liberal wing of the Communist party, once sold 500,000 copies and has seen its circulation almost cut in half. *Gazeta Gdanska* sells about 20,000 daily in the Gdansk region, which is a relatively healthy region economically.

Many papers are finding it difficult to survive with rising costs and sinking readership. Senator Kacynski, head of the Center Alliance, said it was particularly hard for the weeklies to survive because they generally got less advertising than the dailies. Thus a lot of papers are looking for subsidies from either Solidarity or the government. This, in turn, affects editorial policy. Any publication looking for money from the Solidarity Foundation would think twice before criticizing Walesa, whereas any paper hoping for a government subsidy would hesitate to criticize ROAD.

Steven Dubrow, Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. embassy, said that ultimately there are simply too many papers, both independents started up in the overheated political climate without a decent financial base, and long-time unprofitable newspapers that were part of the RSW conglomerate. A large number of newspapers in Poland are destined to go under. In an effort to attract readers, some papers have begun to introduce titillating erotica, a development less pronounced than in Hungary, but one that the Catholic Church has criticized.

For certain publications the outlook is not so bleak. *Gazeta Wyborcza* sells very well and has become Poland's leader in circulation, selling about 400,000 copies daily. *Gazeta Wyborcza* made a few bad business decisions in the flush of its success — for instance setting up numerous local news bureaus throughout Poland that have become big money losers. But a sign of *Gazeta's* financial health is the fact that it is even looking at expansion in a period of general contraction. The paper apparently wanted to buy a controlling interest in the weekly *Tygodnik Literacki,* a literary and cultural paper that resembles the *New York Review of Books.*

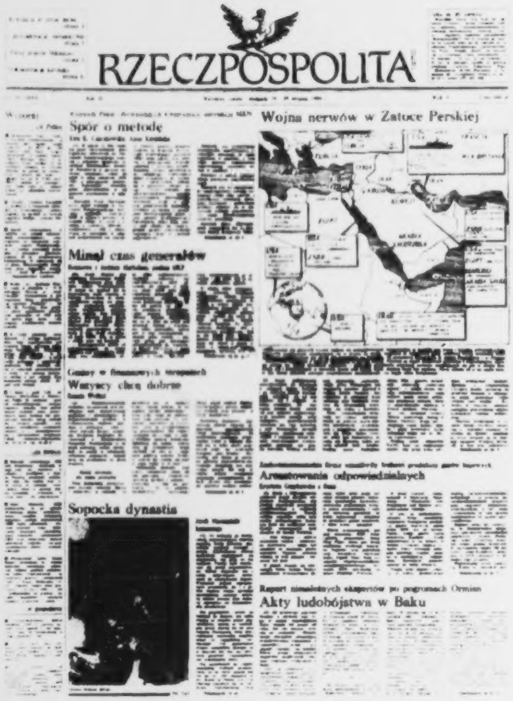
TYGODNIK
LITERACKI

WHITMAN ○ HARTWIG ○ CANETTI ○ PAZ

Rzut oka na ewolucję poezji polskiej w latach 1956-1980

Dekada

etyka i rzemiosło



RZECZPOSPOLITA

Spór o metodę

Wojna nerwów w Zatoce Perskiej

Minął czas generałów

Wszyscy chcą dobrze

Aresztowania odpowiedzialnych

Sopocka dynastia

Raport niezależnych ekspertów po pogromach Ormian

Akty ludobójstwa w Baku

Tygodnik Literacki has also been a financial success, having found a market niche in Poland's crowded newspaper scene. The weekly *Po Prostu*, a paper shut down in 1957 for its liberal line, reappeared in January 1990. The old editorial staffers of *Po Prostu*, Stefan Bratkowski and Andrzej Drawicz, have since become the chairmen of the Polish Journalists Association and the Committee for Radio and Television and have agreed to rejoin *Po Prostu's* editorial staff. Whether this paper can reclaim some of its old readership remains to be seen.

Film is another publication (bi-weekly or monthly) that fills a definite market niche in Poland. It covers new movies and television programs and has short articles on actors and actresses. It has the potential to become Poland's version of *TV Guide*. Its circulation is around 80,000 per issue. But according to *Film's* editor, Maciej Pawlicki, the publication ran up a $30,000 debt several months ago when the price of paper was exceptionally high. Its profit now is only $1,000 per week. *Film* is still controlled by the RSW, and Pawlicki fears that when the liquidating committee finally gets around to *Film* and notices the $30,000 debt, it will close the publication down. This might be avoided, he said, if Western aid steps in to pick up the debt.

Advertising

Big city newspapers rely on advertising for a surprisingly high percentage of their revenue. *Zycie Warszawa* draws 70 percent of its revenues from ads. *Gazeta Wyborcza* draws 40 percent of revenues from ads and hopes to boost the figure to 60 percent. For the small local dailies it is difficult to rely on advertising for much revenue.

Polish television would like to encourage Western advertisers and has priced their rates low in order to attract them. But currently there are only six to seven minutes of commercial time each week day and 16 minutes during the weekend.

All the people at the publications we visited expressed their frustration with the lack of capable business managers and especially advertising managers in Poland. Woycicki, the editor of *Zycie Warszawy*, said it is not unusual for merchants to call him directly, wanting to advertise in his newspaper. It is difficult to get good people to handle the ads and to manage the revenues. *Gazeta Wyborcza* has had French and British managers and consultants visit and offer advice on these matters, but that is no substitute for having its own ad people. According to Maciej Strzembosz, Warsaw bureau chief of *Czas* and an executive at Polish TV Channel One, there is great interest in establishing an advertising agency. Everybody agrees that it would be best if clients could go through ad agencies, not the newspaper itself. But no one knows how to set up an ad agency.

Broadcasting

The broadcasting system is subsidized by the state and does not seem to be under the same pressure to cut costs as the Czechoslovak Television Company (CST). While the two central channels based in Warsaw are in decent shape, the eight regional stations are in financial trouble. Costs have risen and the tax on television usage can not cover the increase. Some have proposed privatizing the second channel, though this idea has met strong opposition.

As in all the East European television systems, personnel grew to an enormous size during the years of Communist mismanagement. Jan Dworak, head of Channel One in Warsaw, said he faces severe cuts in personnel, much like his counterpart Jiri Kanturek in Prague. The state broadcasting system became practically a welfare system under the Communists. Dworak said that at Channel One the movie department alone had 400 employees.

Western programming is expensive, but the Poles lack the money to produce quality programs themselves, although efforts are being made in this area. Strzembosz said that talk shows and political programs are of course easy and cheap to produce, but that if interest in politics flags, Polish television cannot offer much good indigenous entertainment programming.

Quality of Journalism

Style and Objectivity

The greatest weakness of the Polish press is the conviction of most journalists that their job is not merely to report the news, but to shape it with opinion and to advance a particular political line. The Poles see newspapers as political organs and readers expect to see not only the facts reported but a point of view conveyed. Every political faction believes it ought to have a newspaper of its own. Slawomir Sivek and Senator Kacynski of the Solidarity Foundation in Warsaw, for instance, want to start up a daily, not because they see a market niche for an objective nonpartisan paper, but because they believe that their political opponents in ROAD have a strong position in the press in *Gazeta Wyborcza*. They believe that their political group, the Center Alliance, needs something to counter *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

During the 1980s, many of Poland's most talented people worked for the underground press. They were not exactly journalists in the Western sense, but were actually opposition political figures. Indeed the former editor of *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* (Solidarity Weekly), Tadeusz Mazowiecki, is Poland's Prime Minister today. When Mazowiecki left his post as editor, Lech Walesa, who is the guiding spirit behind *Solidarity Weekly*, looked for a replacement who was not necessarily a great journalist, but one who would faithfully convey the Walesa line on issues of the day. He appointed Senator Kacynski, head of the Center Alliance. Hence the close marriage between politicians and newspapers.

Similarly, the editor in chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Adam Michnik, is a member of Parliament and a leader of the ROAD party. ROAD is supportive of the Mazowiecki government and critical of Walesa, and this stand is hardly concealed in its reporting. Articles about Walesa contain critical comments: "Once again, Walesa has failed to see,..." but articles about the government are more positive: "Fortunately, Mazowiecki,..." and so on. Interviewed in January, Mazowiecki stated that the journalist's role should be "to foster positive attitudes toward the state and to stress Poland's path to democracy." Mazowiecki has no intention of muzzling a press that he believes fosters a negative attitude toward the state. But he is still a generally popular politician and there is the danger that the Poles will revert to an instinctive habit of self-censorship by simply refraining from criticizing a leader who is well regarded.

Helena Luczywo, an editor at *Gazeta Wyborcza*, said that she preferred the Anglo-Saxon approach to journalism, in which opinion is scrupulously sifted out from the main articles and reserved for the editorial page. But when *Gazeta Wyborcza* tried this approach, readers wrote in and complained that they wanted more opinion. Luczywo said that Poles are living through confusing times and face political choices that they are not really equipped to make. Thus there is widespread desire on the part of readers to be given an opinion by the newspapers, to be told what is right and wrong.

Kazimierz Woycicki at *Zycie Warzawy* said that he would like to get his journalists to write more objectively and to refrain from opinion-mongering. But it is hard to get them to adopt this style. The journalists at *Zycie Warzawy* see themselves as commentators and essayists; they regard it as beneath their intellectual capacities merely to write concise news stories, and want to be individualistic in their views on political issues. They want to be left alone in their private offices to ponder the crucial matters of the day — not to be engaged in the collaborative editorial page style such as that used by American newspapers.

Woycicki said that this conception of journalism is so ingrained in the older journalists that it is probably useless to try to retrain them in new journalistic approaches. Instead, efforts would probably be spent best training a younger, new generation of journalists.

Foreign Coverage

Foreign coverage is a weakness in the Polish press. Traditionally, newspapers relied on the government news agency, PAP, for information from abroad. The quality of PAP was notoriously bad. Now PAP is under new management, and most of the journalists we spoke with expected some improvement in the quality of the news service. Radio Free Europe has also recently set up a news bureau in Warsaw that might be a source of international news.

Few papers can afford a foreign correspondent, let alone a corps of foreign correspondents, and the supply of qualified people is low. *Gazeta Wyborcza* has a correspondent in Moscow and would very much like to have one in Washington, but this is prohibitively expensive for the time being. Woycicki at *Zycie Warszawy* said that he has been looking for a correspondent to send to Berlin to cover German unification, but he is unable to find a qualified journalist who speaks German. Maciej Strzembosz suggested that the independent press could cooperate in setting up a network of foreign correspondents that the various newspapers would essentially share. This idea is only in the planning stage at this point.

Specialty Journalists

Specialty journalists are also lacking in Poland, but the Poles seem to have a good notion of how they can spice their dailies with special sections. *Gazeta Gdanska*, for example runs different sections such as "Business" and "Weekend." Its editor, Adam Kinaszewski, said that he got the idea after seeing several issues of *USA Today*. *Czas* in Cracow runs different special sections for different days of the week. *Gazeta Bankowa*, a business paper that aspires to become Poland's *Wall Street Journal*, was founded in 1988. It has the backing of *L'Expansion*, a French paper that was the first foreign company to enter Poland's media market.

Woycicki of *Zycie Warszawy* pointed out that since Poland has no stock market, it is hard to make "news" out of economic matters. One can always offer commentary on the government's economic policy or report when the government makes some new economic pronouncement, but only a stock market would provide a daily flow of economic news.

Woycicki said he would also like to have journalists who could write articles relating to the changes in lifestyle Poles are experiencing due to the drop in the standard of living or to the current economic transformation. But journalists who can write thoughtfully about the links between economy and society are few and far between. This is a bit ironic, for the Marxist ideology by which the Poles have lived for the past 40 years is founded on the notion that society and economy are inextricably linked and that social conditions are determined by real economic conditions.

KOPALNIE NAD I POD KRESKĄ – STR. 8, 9

GAZETA BANKOWA

1.07—7.07 1990 r

Jak we mgle

Nowe za stare

The fact that a talented journalist like Maciej Strzembosz has to do double duty at *Czas* and at Channel One is testimony to the short supply of top-notch journalists in Poland.

Journalism Education

Polish journalists, like journalists we met elsewhere in Eastern Europe, generally held journalism schools in low regard. The consensus from the people we met with was that it is better to have individuals trained in other fields like history, law or philosophy than to have them trained specifically as journalists. All of the journalists at the important newspapers were formerly outsiders, whereas the journalism school in Warsaw produced only Communist Party hacks well versed in Marxist-Leninist theory. In order to work in a high position at one of the old RSW papers, one had to have a certificate from a journalism school. These schools actually became a place to sort out the ideologically impure and prevent them from practicing journalism. The Faculty of Journalism at Warsaw University was Communist, though apparently not as much as the Faculty of Journalism in Prague. Still the purge of Communist teachers in Warsaw has not been as complete as in Prague.

Short seminars on specific areas of journalism could be an effective means of honing the skills of practicing journalists. Stefan Bratkowski, former head of the Polish Journalists Association and editor in chief of *Gazeta i Nowoczesnocs* in Warsaw, said he has used a handbook produced by the U.S. organization World Press Freedom Committee and found it very useful. The Poles need training in many areas related to journalism, such as language-training, especially in English, and in the business aspects of running a newspaper.

Strzembosz warned that sending Poles to the United States for internships has its problems. First, since quality journalists are in such short supply there will always be the the tendency for media organizations to send their second-raters for internships abroad. Second, Strzembosz said he noted a certain schizophrenia in Polish journalists who go to the West. They go to intern at a Western publication, absorb Western journalistic techniques, write in a Western style during their internship, but then return to Poland and immediately revert to writing in the familiar opinion-laden style. The problem, he said, is that these journalists see Poland as needing a different journalistic approach.

Journalists' Associations

The Polish Journalists Association was an early and conspicuous success. It was formed in 1951 and became a remarkable advocate of change and liberalization during the blossoming of the Solidarity movement in 1980. It was banned under martial law in 1982 and refounded (or better, resurfaced) as Communism crumbled in 1989. To date, it is probably the most successful of the new East European journalists' associations. It brought together most of the newspaper journalists who had been in the underground during the years of Communist rule, and provided a sounding board for press issues during the first months of the Mazowiecki government. The association has begun bestowing awards for journalistic excellence and addressing questions of journalism standards.

Since the falling out among the former leaders of Solidarity, the Journalists Association too has been rife with dissent. Stefan Bratkowski, who was chairman in 1980 and again in 1989, yielded the position to Maciej Ilowiecki. According to Bratkowski, the Journalists Association is now so divided that it would not be an organ through which to launch programs at the moment. If the Association were given resources, Bratkowski speculated, its members would probably engage in endless squabbling over how they would be allocated; however, Steven Dubrow, the U.S. Public Affairs officer at the Polish embassy, said that the Association would be a good organization to work with in setting up training programs. He said that the Association is trying to map out a strategy for establishing a journalism institute and could use help on this.

An Association of Polish Journalists was set up by the Communist government in 1982 to replace the banned Polish Journalists Association. It still exists and has recently established cool but cordial relations with the independent Polish Journalists Association. The two groups have discussed possible cooperation in the future, especially in the area of helping unemployed journalists, whose numbers are sure to grow when the RSW liquidation progresses.

Broadcasting

Jan Dworak, head of Channel One, said that while Polish television has made strides since the Mazowiecki government was formed, it still has a long

CZAS
KRAKOWSKI

Z TIRANY DO RAJU

ZACHÓD PŁACI, ALE WYMAGA

RZĄD A SAMORZĄD

NIEREALNE PRZEPISY,
REALNI BEZROBOTNI

SAGITA

RADIO
UKF
73,2 MHz
Solidarność

way to go. Part of the problem, he said, was that the new political factions, ROAD and the Center Alliance, have inherited the mindset of the Communists. Both groups try to influence television to their own advantage. The government might, for example, try to block a program on popular discontent on the grounds that it is poorly produced. Dworak said that although Poland has two channels, the television system only has one news department. Dworak would like to see more pluralism in television news by establishing a second news department for the second channel.

Dworak said that he simultaneously faces gross overstaffing and an extreme shortage of qualified people. Polish television was strictly controlled by the Communists, and all the upper-echelon and trained personnel were Communists. Since Polish television was largely a subsidized enterprise with the purpose of maintaining a complacent populace, these television people never really used their imaginations or improved their skills. Furthermore, many of the Communists were dismissed after the Mazowiecki government was formed. Thus Dworak is left with only a handful of trained, creative thinkers. He said he would find it difficult to send any of his key people abroad for further training. The situation at the regional station in Poznan is better, according to its manager, Jan Kubiak. Kubiak said that while a lot of good people left the station after martial law was declared, many are now returning.

Radio Solidarity is at this point such a small operation that it really has not been able to develop much of its own programming. About 90 percent of what it broadcasts is Western pop music. Its staff is very small, but able to handle the limited amount of programming it creates itself, composed mainly of call-in talk radio shows. For news, Radio Solidarity relies heavily on BBC World Service.

Technology

The Press

The equipment of the Polish press and the Polish media in general is probably in the worst shape of all the countries we visited. The printing plants are almost all antiquated. *Film*, for instance, is run on an old rotogravure. *Gazeta Gdanska* uses the old hot metal method of printing, and print quality is poor. It probably makes little sense, however, to begin improving printing plant equipment until the RSW liquidation is sorted out.

Newsroom technology is also in an antiquated state. *Gazeta Wyborcza* had the best newsroom of the private papers we visited. It had a number of computers, and Ernest Skalski, one of the paper's editors, said more were needed if *Gazeta Wyborcza* is to expand, as it would like. *Rzeczpospolita*, the government newspaper, is relatively well endowed with newsroom technology and operates out of spacious quarters in downtown Warsaw. Brand new independents like *Czas* and *Gazeta Gdanska* have the most dire need for newsroom technology. They lack computer equipment, laptops, graphics equipment, and even such basic things as tape recorders and copy machines.

Broadcasting

The capacity of Polish broadcasting is said by some to be limited by the narrow frequency spectrum available. Actually, the Poles have spectrum space for as many as 148 television stations and 434 FM radio stations but lack the equipment to utilize these frequencies. In radio, for instance, the Poles would need new transmitters to break into the higher FM frequencies. Radio Malopolska Fun in Cracow has begun broadcasting on an FM frequency.

One alternative to broadcasting is cable, which is just beginning in Poland. David Chase, an American of

Polish extraction, has recently signed an agreement with the Polish government to construct cable in Poland. It is a joint venture, though 70 percent is owned by his company, Chase Enterprises. Building has already begun in Gdansk, and Chase has reportedly invested $20 million to $40 million of his own money to start up the project. He eventually expects to put as much as $900 million into the nationwide project.

At state television, new production equipment is sorely needed. Jan Kubiak said that the facilities at his station in Poznan are generally about 30 years old. He lacks film editing equipment and video cassettes, and is handicapped by old and dilapidated camera equipment. Dworak at Channel One pointed out that Polish television is in such financial straits that any equipment purchases really ought to be preceded by an expert needs assessment. He said that video production equipment is most sorely needed. The Poles long for joint ventures to bring in the capital to make some of these equipment purchases possible.

Overview of Polish Media:

Publications

Gazeta Wyborcza
[Electoral Gazette]
Founded in summer 1989 to back Solidarity in the Polish elections. Since then it has gained in prestige and now has highest circulation of any daily nationwide.

Zycie Warszawy
[Warsaw Life]
A decade-old newspaper with solid journalists. Has highest circulation in Warsaw region.

Gazeta Bankowa
[Banking Gazette]
A business-oriented newspaper, now published weekly. Aspires to be the *Wall Street Journal* of Poland.

Rzeczpospolita
[Republic]
The official government newspaper. Has a serious tone, and is considered high quality.

Express
Tabloid-style daily sold mostly in Warsaw.

Tygodnik Solidanosc
[Solidarity Weekly]
Once the most important mouthpiece for dissident Solidarity movement. Now associated with pro-Walesa Center Alliance.

Czas
[Cracow Times]
Newly founded independent based in Cracow. Aspires to be major national daily.

Gazeta Gdanska
[Gdansk Gazette]
New Gdansk daily which seeks independent political line.

Tygodnik Powszechny
[Universal Weekly]
Catholic weekly based in Cracow. Politically independent. Was important critical voice in press for past 40 years.

Gazeta Poznanska
[Poznan Gazette]
New independent based in Poznan.

Trybuna
[Tribune]
Formerly called *Trybuna Ludu*, this is the organ of the Communist Party. Circulation has plummeted in the past year.

Polityka
A weekly connected with the liberal wing of the Communist Party. Its once high circulation has fallen drastically.

Tygodnik Literacki
[Literary Weekly]
High-quality literary and cultural weekly. Independent.

Po Prostu
[Simply Said]
Once a weekly known for its liberal and occasionally dissident position, was shut down by the regime in 1957. Has recently recommenced publishing.

Film
A bi-weekly or monthly publication. Features stories on film and television actors, photos, television listings.

Gazeta i Nowoczesnosc
[The Gazette and Contemporary Times]
A weekly affiliated with *Gazeta Wyborcza*. It concentrates on issues related to science and technology.

PWA
New independent political weekly based in Warsaw. Circulation is low.

Tygodnik Gdanska
[Gdansk Weekly]
Weekly publication of Solidarity in Gdansk. Has tried to maintain journalistic independence vis-a-vis Center Alliance. Won Polish Journalists Association's award for best weekly.

Broadcasting

Television

State-owned Channels
Channel One is broadcast nationwide; it offers news and entertainment; *Channel Two*, also broadcast nationwide, offers cultural programs and those of regional interest.

Regional Stations
There are eight.

TV Echo
A local private broadcasting venture based in Wroclaw.

Radio

National Stations
There are four.

Malopolska Fun
A Cracow-based independent station broadcasting French programming.

Radio Solidarity
An independent station based in Warsaw. Mostly music.

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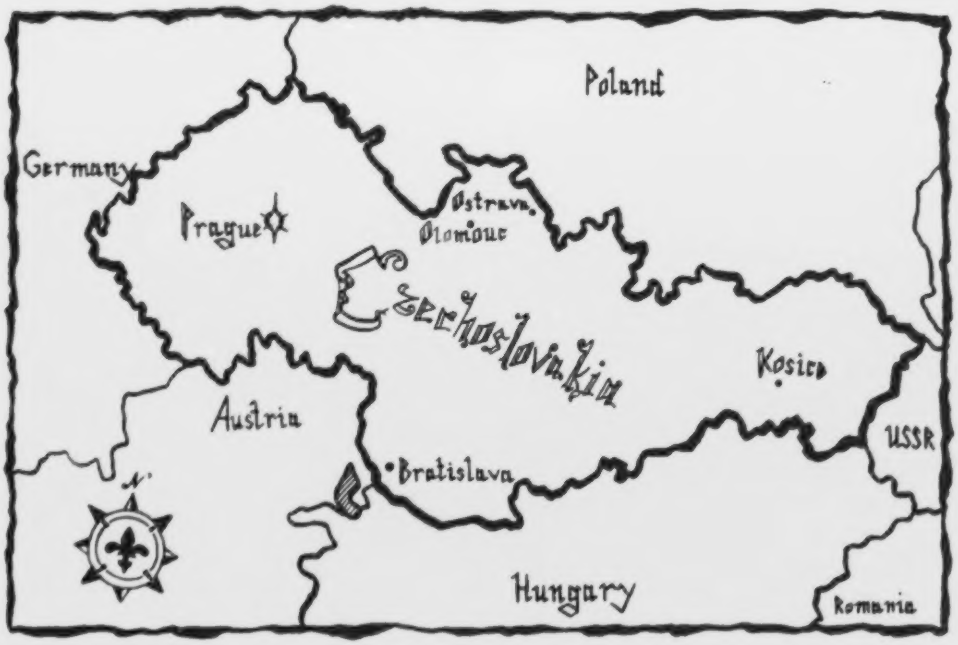
Czechoslovakia


Poland
Germany
Prague
Ostrava
Olomouc
Czechoslovakia
Kosice
Austria
USSR
N
Bratislava
Hungary
Romania

Czechoslovakia

Population: 15,291,000 (1980)

Area: 127,946 sq.km. (49,400 sq.mi)

GNP: 840.4 billion koruna (US $80.5 billion) (1979)

Literacy Rate: 99%

Language(s): Czech, Slovak

Currency: The koruna

Czechoslovakia:

In Context

Czechoslovakia is a fairly new state, created in 1918 when the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was destroyed. Its western-most part, inhabited by Czechs and Germans at the start of the 20th century, was heavily industrialized. As a region, it resembled West European countries in terms of per capita income, literacy and the size of its middle class. The eastern part of Czechoslovakia, inhabited mostly by Slovaks and a substantial Hungarian minority, was not nearly as developed; rather than being a bourgeois, urban people like the Czechs, the Slovaks still lived for the most part as peasants on the land.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, it was often Czech administrators, managers, bureaucrats and factory owners who were the movers and shakers in Slovakia. Naturally enough, this national imbalance engendered friction and distrust, although rhetoric concerning the brotherhood of the Czech and Slovak Slavic tribes managed to smooth over some of the troubles.

Politically, Czechoslovakia was an island of democracy in Eastern Europe between the world wars, following a fairly liberal and social-democratic domestic course under the leadership of Tomas G. Masaryk, the country's first president.

In the 1930s, when the Depression hit Czechoslovakia hard, its substantial German minority began to turn toward the National Socialist ideology and the neighboring Third Reich. At the famous conference of the West European powers in Munich in 1938, Czechoslovakia was dealt a crushing blow: Large parts of the country were detached and handed over to Germany. The following year Slovakia, encouraged by Hitler, declared its independence, and the remainder of Czechoslovakia was formed into a "protectorate" within the German Reich. After the war in 1945, Czechoslovakia's Germans paid a high price for their disloyalty. They were expelled *en masse* from the country, and have not been allowed to return since.

In February 1948, after less than three years of re-established multi-party rule, Czechoslovakia fell victim to a Soviet-inspired Communist coup. In the following years, bloody purge followed bloody purge as the country's prewar bourgeois elite was systematically dispossessed. Private enterprise was erased with a thoroughness almost unmatched in the rest of Eastern Europe, and the great bulk of farmland was expropriated for large new state collectives.

In the 1960s, the Communist Party's grip began to loosen, and the Prague Spring of 1968 resulted. Alexander Dubcek and other reform-minded Communists swept hard-liners from power temporarily and instituted changes that, although uncoordinated, pointed in directions many Westerners believed promising. Warsaw Pact armies, however, put a stop to this attempt to establish what Dubcek called "Socialism with a Human Face."

Now it was the Communist reformers' turn to fall victim to a thorough purge, as the Party's newly installed head, Gustav Husak, supervised a return to orthodoxy. The state security apparatus, beefed up substantially, succeeded in stifling public life for the next 20 years. Only a small and isolated dissident community, which counted as one of its members playwright Vaclav Havel, managed to keep alive the ideas of the

Prague Spring. The Slovaks, meanwhile, were given new opportunities to shape their own affairs independent of the Czechs through a federal rearrangement of Czechoslovakia.

In 1988 and 1989, as other countries in Eastern Europe distanced themselves from the Soviet Union and began to dismantle their systems of one-party rule, Czechoslovakia's Communist leadership held on ever more tightly to its power, refusing to make concessions. With each national holiday, the small crowds that gathered in Prague to demand change grew larger, while the regime's response became progressively more violent.

In November 1989, Czech students marching through the streets of Prague in support of democratic reforms were brutally beaten. Rumors spread that someone had been killed, and protests were organized which quickly swelled in number. In a development that few could have predicted, demonstrations filled the city's huge Wenceslaus Square.

Vaclav Havel and other dissidents, catapulted to the head of the opposition movement, soon entered into negotiations with the government concerning fundamental reforms. Television and newspapers, taken over by the opposition, played a pivotal role in keeping the revolution alive and spreading it to the countryside. By New Year's Day, Communist Party leader Husak had resigned from his post as president of Czechoslovakia, and Havel had taken his place. Non-Communist ministers entered the government, and the enormous task of undoing the effects of more than 40 years of dictatorial rule was begun.

Czechoslovakia's was perhaps the most idealistic of the East European revolutions of 1989. Unlike Hungary, with its "goulash Communism," Czechoslovakia had few gray areas, few Communist reformers. And unlike Romania, the nation experienced little bloodshed when the changes actually came. It was this humane quality in particular that gave rise to the term "Velvet Revolution."

Vaclav Havel, meanwhile, has injected a philosophical touch into that revolution, lecturing his people quietly and insistently on the virtues of restraint, civic virtue and responsibility. His affinity for Jeffersonian values and American-style republicanism was made clear during his whirlwind visit to the United States earlier this year.

In June 1990, free national elections were held. The Czech Civic Forum, supported by Havel, emerged as the decisive winner in the western part of the country, while the Public Against Violence, a Slovak group affiliated with the Civic Forum, fared well in the east. Havel used his constitutional powers as president to appoint a new government that differed little from the one that had run the country in recent months, and charged it with moving quickly in addressing the many problems that faced Czechoslovakia.

Prices have risen steeply since then, and Czechs and Slovaks are beginning to realize just how difficult the coming years will be. Private businesses, now encouraged by the state, have begun to appear and are helping to ameliorate some of the material shortages from which the country suffers. State-administered enterprise, however, was so dominant and so inefficient in past years that the economy is now verging on collapse; new private bakeries and auto-repair shops cannot change this fundamental fact. Czechoslovakia, one of Europe's richest and most industrialized states in 1945, is now a poor country facing economic upheaval and dislocation.

Czechoslovakia's media have the same problems as other sectors of the economy. Equipment is outdated and computer technology has failed to change the workplace as it has in the West. Bloated payroll lists, the consequence of a government policy of providing everyone with a job, even if there was nothing to do, now burden every newspaper trying to produce a good product cheaply. Trained personnel, especially people who know Western languages, are scarce. Capital for new investment is hard to find, in part because Czechs and Slovaks have little money in the bank, but also because the Czechoslovak koruna still cannot be exchanged for Western currencies.

Lidove Noviny, a new daily newspaper, has no bureaucratic past to weigh it down, unlike publications that are carryovers from the old regime, but it still must struggle to operate within the confines of a crumbling infrastructure burdened by unreliable subcontractors and a poor work ethic, among other things. If Czechoslovakia's revolution is to be consolidated, the media must build on their newly gained freedom. Whether they can do so remains to be seen.

The Task Force Report on Czechoslovak Media

Legal Structure and Legal Developments

One is struck in Czechoslovakia both by the fluid state of media laws and by the relative nonchalance of Czech and Slovak journalists toward them. Journalists clearly enjoy more freedom under the benevolent Havel regime than they have at any time in the past 50 years. Old Communist media laws have not yet been completely abolished and replaced with new Western-style ones, but there is no practical censorship. Journalists tend to focus on material obstacles to a free press — the newsprint shortage, for example — rather than on legal ones. In both print and broadcast media, journalists regard new media laws as desirable, but less urgent than concrete problems such as frequency allocation or newspaper distribution.

Such a short-term focus on the part of journalists is probably justified. It ought to be balanced, however, by a longer-term view that seeks to establish a media law which insures a free and independent media beyond the Havel regime and into the next century. Jan Ruml, former editor of the highly regarded political weekly *Respekt* and now Deputy Interior Minister, will be the main architect of the new media law, particularly the new press law.

Press Law

The old press law was amended in March 1990, at which point it became, in effect, a dead letter. The law required that new publications register with the Czech Ministry of Information, which died shortly after the Communists were toppled in 1989. But the registration requirement was not abolished, instead registrants are now referred to the Interior Ministry. Would-be publishers must provide the Ministry with information about their intended readership and content. The process seems to have become routinized, and while no one could cite an example of the Havel regime refusing to register a new newspaper, a less benevolent regime could easily turn the registration law into an instrument of restriction. The extent to which foreign investment will be permitted in Czechoslovak media has yet to be ironed out.

The original law also remains on the books. It was used under the old regime to keep journalists from publishing attacks on members of the government. Again, the Havel regime has not used the libel law as a weapon, but it could become a tool to inhibit critical journalism. Charter 77 organized conferences on such constitutional issues that have featured leading American attorneys and constitutional scholars. Czechoslovak journalists could probably profit from consultations with American legal scholars on press law.

The need for the Czechs and Slovaks to codify freedom of the press, freedom of information and libel law is illustrated by the following example. At a July meeting of American and East European journalists held in Prague, President Havel raised a few eyebrows when he asserted that "certain state secrets will always exist, of course, and he who breaks the law must be punished, because he is committing a crime." Havel was referring to his government's ban on the publication of the names of former secret police informers on the grounds that family members of such collaborators could be endangered if their names were disclosed. Havel urged journalists to exercise both freedom and responsibility, the latter a term that for many American journalists is a fighting word.

If Havel was elusive, his press secretary, Michael Zantovsky, was more pointed: "We just happen to think that the damage caused by the publication of such a list would justify sending someone [a journalist] to jail." When asked how the government would deal with a journalist who published a scurrilous article blasting Havel's government, Zantovsky replied, "We're going to sue the bastard!" — presumably under the old libel law. Some American journalists exploded with anger at this and warned about the dangers of government secrecy and control of information. East European journalists attending the meeting, on the other hand, felt that the Americans overreacted to Havel's and Zantovsky's remarks. None of this ought to raise the specter of a draconian press regime under Havel. It does, however, point to the need to institutionalize some of the freedoms for which the people in Wenceslaus Square struggled.

Interestingly, the journalists' conference debate received extensive editorial coverage in the United States but, with one exception, was unmentioned in the Czech press. It was only one month later, when Zantovsky offered his resignation — which was refused — that the Czech papers gave any attention to the affair. Most carried a *Washington Post* article written by *Post* editor Ben Bradlee.

Broadcasting Law

Broadcasting law is similarly in a state of flux. The existing television law, under which television is a branch of the government, dates from 1964. Clearly, the government-television relationship must change, in both legal and practical terms. A broadcasting law is now being drafted with the help of some Americans who belong to the Transatlantic Dialogue on European Broadcasting. Already the government has relinquished strict control over programming decisions. This loosening of control was already under way during the last years of the Communist regime. The decision of Ceskoslovenskie Televize (CST) to broadcast the protests in Wenceslaus Square in November 1989, for instance, played an important role in bringing down the regime.

However, if CST is no longer beholden to the government politically, it is still dependent on it economically. Massive subsidies from the government keep CST afloat and, in this regard, a less open regime than Havel's could exert an undesirable influence over television. In fact Havel's government has recently levied fines against CST for budgetary indiscretion.

Both the government and TV recognize that this state of economic dependence cannot last forever. Jiri Kanturek, the head of Czechoslovak television, said that he is drafting a report exploring ways to introduce more entrepreneurial activity and advertising to CST. Some American business advice on such matters might be useful, but market forces in Czechoslovakia must be permitted to operate freely in order for Kanturek's plans to work. Foreign ownership of broadcasting properties is still prohibited in Czechoslovakia.

CST operates three stations: Channel One, a federal station that broadcasts over the entire country; Channel Two, a national, or regional station that broadcasts Czech or Slovak programming in the respective parts of the country; and Channel Three, an international station that once relied heavily on Soviet programming but now also features a large number of American, British and French programs in their original languages. CNN broadcasts on Channel Three for several hours a day.

Independent Broadcasting

A bill that should become law this fall will make it permissible to start a fourth channel. For technical and financial reasons, however, this undertaking will be daunting. Kanturek said that the government is very anxious to have an independent station, but that a lack of repeaters and frequencies will make this difficult for years to come. The government itself has no plans to expand to a fourth channel. Kanturek said that the government has about 30 applications awaiting processing for independent TV licenses.

Some people we interviewed, such as Richard Kraus, who heads a production house called NTV, feel that Kanturek is less enthusiastic about an independent station than he lets on and suggest that the government has been dragging its feet with respect to independent TV. Kraus said that of the 30 license applicants, only three will receive a license.

Given his contacts in the government, Kraus felt confident that he would receive a license. In the murky legal waters of the Czechoslovak media, there is no substitute for knowing people in high places. Kraus also ominously suggested that members of the old Communist secret police were applying for independent broadcasting licenses. Ethnic differences, while not nearly as strident as those in Yugoslavia, may also play a role in the licensing of independent broadcasters. The licenses will be granted by Czechs in Prague. Whether potential broadcasters in Slovakia will accept a refusal by the Czechs is open to question.

RESPEKT RESPEKT
RESPEKT
HANOI JANE
Naši v Gulagu
15
Kdo vyhrál?
20. — 26.6. 1990
CENA 3,50

How might aid from the United States help foster independent television? One possible avenue is financial and technological support. Providing a group with sufficient money to start up a fourth television station in Czechoslovakia would require very deep pockets. An entire station's worth of equipment would have to be bought in the West and assembled in Czechoslovakia.

A more prudent approach, and one that has been successful in Poland, would be to provide independent producers such as Kraus with seed money for production facilities, cameras and other equipment. In this way they can produce popular programs and show them during the time leased from one of the three state channels. Kanturek said he was amenable to selling state air time to independent producers and, since the state channels only broadcast from mid-morning until about midnight, air time is available. If the programs attract a following, then it might be time to consider investing in a fourth station.

Ultimately though, the Czechs and Slovaks do not envision for themselves the predominantly commercial television system that prevails in the United States. The three main stations will remain in government hands and presumably will be under an independent oversight board representing different segments of society.

There are about 20 applications pending for radio licenses, most of them FM. Like the would-be television broadcasters, they will have to wait for the proper legislation to be put in place. The government has made a special case for Radio Free Europe, which will begin broadcasting on an AM transmitter in Prague. Europe 2, an FM service that is a joint venture between a French station, Radio 1 and Czechoslovak Radio, is also already underway.

Programming

Programming decisions are currently made by a government-employed programming director and a 12-member board. We heard several complaints about the programming decisions made by the board. Some characterized Czechoslovak programming as basically free, but stodgy and unimaginative. Some of the problem may be commercial. Without hard currency, it is difficult for the Czechs to purchase some of the flashier Western programs. But the people making the programming decisions — the director and the board — may be a greater part of the problem. Many of these individuals are likely to be cautious bureaucrats who are well insulated from public opinion.

We heard complaints, for instance, that it is still relatively rare for Czechoslovak television to present programs critical of the Soviet Union. The Soviets seem more prone to criticize themselves than to receive criticism from their Czech and Slovak neighbors. Similarly, news and programs about Poland, which has pursued a much more radical path to economic liberalization than Czechoslovakia, are infrequent primarily because, as one of our hosts said, the government wants support for its more incremental economic approach and would prefer to avoid stirring up dissent by parading the Polish approach across Czechoslovak TV screens.

Another Czech pointed out that the BBC has produced a first-rate documentary on Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution, a program which mysteriously has not yet found its way to Czechoslovak television. When an independent oversight board is established, it will monitor the programming decisions made by the program director and the board, and programming will presumably become more democratic.

The composition of this oversight board will be crucial and a matter of contention. There is general agreement that the board must be "representative" of society and independent of Parliament. But the Parliament itself will establish the oversight board. How will it determine what is representative? Some argue that the Parliament is Czechoslovakia's most representative body and that a representative oversight board ought to be composed of individuals whose political affiliations are roughly proportionate to those that exist in the Parliament. But others argue that Civic Forum, with its Slovak equivalent, the Public Against Violence, has an absolute majority in Parliament, and giving it the same majority in the television oversight board would in effect give the governing party control of Czechoslovak television. The interests of minority parties and groups could well be overlooked.

Since composing the board on a proportional basis has its pitfalls, the Parliament might try to compose a board that would contain a broader cross section of society. Each party, religious and ethnic group would have a member on the board, regardless of proportionality. The West Germans have developed an admirable system along these lines, and the Czechs and Slovaks are likely to turn to them rather than to the Americans as a model for the legal structure of their television system. According to Kanturek, the Czechs and Slovaks are studying the West German model intently. Whether American broadcasting law is applicable to the Czechoslovak situation or whether American legal advice in structuring the Czechoslovak law would prove useful is questionable.

Press Independence

Keeping control of television programming from the hands of the political parties will be difficult, but wresting their control over the newspapers may be even harder. Here the quandary is not legal *per se*, but a question of tradition. Many newspapers are organs of political parties. *Svobodne Slovo* (Free Word) has traditionally been the mouthpiece of the Socialist Party (i.e., the old Socialists, not the newly renamed Communists). *Lidova Demokracie* serves the Christian Democratic Party. Under the old regime, the Christian Democrats and Socialists existed as fictitiously independent parties while in fact following Communist policies at all times. Since the dramatic events of November 1989, they have been trying to establish real credentials for themselves both as political movements and as publishers of major daily newspapers.

In the new Czechoslovakia there is little sense, from the journalist's point of view, in maintaining these party affiliations. Journalists would like the freedom to pursue a more independent editorial line, and the parties are a financial liability rather than a blessing. Journalists at *Svobodne Slovo* went on strike this summer, demanding more independence from the Socialist Party. But old links are slow to die. If *Svobodne Slovo* or *Lidova Demokracie* were to break from its respective party there would undoubtedly be a great number of onerous legal questions such as: Who owns the rights to the masthead? Who controls the office space? Who controls the equipment?

While Poland has had some 600 new newspapers and journals founded since Communist control deteriorated, the number of truly independent Czech publications is small: newspapers *Lidove Noviny, Respekt, Studentske Listy, Narodna Obroda*; magazines *Reporter* and *Vokno;* and a few other new tabloids.

Business and Economics of the Media

Ownership, the cornerstone of Western-style business, is in a state of confusion in Czechoslovakia. Media enterprises that operated under the Communist regime scarcely addressed ownership questions because private property was virtually nonexistent in this sector of the economy. Some enterprises were clearly the property of the Communist Party — *Rude Pravo*, the Czech Communist daily, and *Pravda*, its Slovak-language counterpart, for instance. The broadcasting system was state property, not strictly the property of the Communist Party, though of course the party exercised practical control.

The print media already have some privately owned enterprises, such as the newspapers *Lidove Noviny* and *Respekt.* Formerly Communist provincial newspapers are in a particularly murky situation. Should the Communists be allowed to continue owning these papers? Should they be allowed to sell them to Westerners, as in the Hungarian-Springer deal? Should these papers be auctioned off, as the Poles are attempting? The Czechs and Slovaks seem to be wary of foreign ownership. Robert Maxwell has made a number of inquiries, most notably to *Lidove Noviny* and *Rude Pravo,* but his attempts to buy a controlling share were rebuffed.

Printing

The ownership of printing facilities is also a mystery. Under the Communist regime, the state owned most printing plants. *Svobodne Slovo* is published by Melantrich, a publishing house founded around the turn of the century and nationalized in 1948. Melantrich would now like to transform itself into a joint stock company, although such an undertaking is fraught with uncertainty. In the jumble of government subsidies and nationalized revenues, it is not clear whether Melantrich is a viable business or whether it could attract investors. Milan Nevole, publisher of *Svobodne Slovo,* said he hoped that the Socialist Party would enter into a joint stock venture with the publishing house.

The Communist Party built a large modern printing facility in 1988 using state money. Although the Communists might still hold the title to the facility, its actual ownership is contested. Non-Communist newspapers such as *Respekt* are now printed in this facility at a considerable cost, part of which has to be paid in hard currency. Just who pockets the profits generated by this printing house is unclear, but it is likely that the Communists who ran the printing house under the old regime now intend to continue running it under the new regime.

This convoluted ownership situation is not confined to the media industry. Since the Communists under the old regime held all the top management positions, these Communist (or now former Communist) managers are in the best position to run the various enterprises under new market conditions at considerable profit to themselves.

Newsprint

The scarcity and high cost of paper are major obstacles for the nascent independent press. A very high proportion of production costs go to purchasing newsprint, and often even when a newspaper has sufficient money to purchase the newsprint, it is simply not available.

The price of newsprint roughly doubled in the months following the Velvet Revolution and increased another 60 percent in July. *Lidove Noviny,* for example, sells about 350,000 copies, but its editors estimate that if sufficient paper were available they could print and sell up to 500,000 copies.

Imported newsprint is, of course, available, but must be purchased with hard currency, which is itself in short supply. Here again, the media are suffering from the effects of the Communist regime's state-run economy. Newsprint is still obtained in large part through imports from the Soviet Union. Under the old regime, supplies were allocated centrally, with politics always playing a prominent role in deciding which papers got how much. The Czech Communist daily, *Rude Pravo,* had no problems getting as much newsprint as it wanted.

The Havel government has reallocated the newsprint supply, taking some away from *Rude Pravo* and other Communist publications and giving more to new independent newspapers. But this is really no answer to the problem. The government will always be unable to measure adequately the demand by different newspapers and cannot allocate newsprint efficiently so that supply meets demand. As long as this system prevails, there will always be the danger that the government could give the newsprint to the publications it favors while starving out the publications of which it disapproves.

A free market system is needed in the paper industry. But the demonopolization of paper production is full of problems. If the paper industry were to convert to a free market system tomorrow, the Communists would fare the best because the Party has a huge treasure chest and could buy newsprint despite its high cost. The small, independent newspapers that currently receive a modest government allocation of newsprint would suffer the most.

Distribution

Next to the scarcity and high price of newsprint, distribution is the biggest problem facing the independent Czech and Slovak press. Under the old regime, distribution was handled solely by the government, which distributed newspapers for street sale through state-owned kiosks. In addition, many Czechs and Slovaks received one of the legal papers through the mail every day.

Today the flood of new publications has all but overwhelmed the kiosk system. Since it is still run by Communists, this system may be used to discriminate against individual publications according to their politics. Ivan Lamper, the editor of the weekly *Respekt*, said that the distributors have stalled on distributing his paper in the countryside. *Respekt* sells about 60,000 to 70,000 copies in Prague, but only 5,000 outside the capital — 3,000 of which are sold in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia's second city.

The difference between city and country reading preferences cannot possibly account for this gross disparity. Lamper feels that the distributors are refusing to carry his paper into the countryside for political reasons. The Velvet Revolution had less impact in the country than in Prague. The country folk are less politicized and less anti-Communist than their compatriots in the cities, and pro-Communists who run the distribution system would like it to stay that way.

The question is whether the Czechs and Slovaks ought to try to improve the kiosk system or abandon it altogether. Arguably, they could make personnel changes, ridding the kiosk management of its pro-Communists and generally improving operations. Many newspapers are already distributing outside of the kiosk system. Lamper of *Respekt* said that about 50 percent of his sales now come through street sales — usually young boys hawking papers — a scene reminiscent of turn-of-the-century America. Nevole of *Svobodne Slovo* also said that he is now distributing in part, independent of the kiosks, to stores that have agreed to sell his paper and on the streets.

Both Lamper and Nevole mentioned some initiatives for an independent distribution system, but both were vague. The initiatives seem to be in the planning stage. Lamper was looking to set up an independent distribution company in cooperation with *Lidove Noviny, Studentske Listy* and *Vokno*, another new publication. Nevole did not mention this particular initiative, but said that the Swiss have been in Prague trying to establish an independent distribution system.

The distribution situation in Prague will undoubtedly improve with time. Getting the independent press to the people in the countryside is the most difficult problem. Thomas Wentworth at the American Embassy felt that it would be premature for anyone to become involved in aiding the distribution system. However, if an independent company of the sort Lamper envisioned were to come into being, guidance from Western distribution consultants could be most useful.

Readership

The flourish of new newspapers that attended the Velvet Revolution, along with the numerous newspapers that already existed, has led to overabundance. Prague now has some 12 dailies, and some of these will not survive. There are already signs that newspaper readership is declining in general. Families on a tight budget tend to forgo purchasing a newspaper, and as the political scene becomes more routine and less volatile, interest in the events of the day will also probably wane.

Svobodne Slovo is an example of the difficulties newspapers will have surviving in the new business climate. Under the old system, *Svobodne Slovo* could rely on some state subsidies and, as the Socialist Party paper, a fairly loyal readership. Now the state subsidies have ceased, but the paper still must yield an incredible proportion of its profits (50 percent) to the government. The Socialist Party also takes a cut of the paper's profits. If *Svobodne Slovo* cuts its long affiliation with the party, it may lose some of its readership. Meanwhile, the nonpartisan daily newspaper already seems fairly crowded.

Like so many papers in Eastern Europe, *Svobodne Slovo* needs business advice on how to position itself in the market, what to charge, how to cut costs and how to attract advertisement. Still, some papers such as

Respekt and *Lidove Noviny* are making a modest but healthy profit. Investors should beware of trying to aid a newspaper that could go under in the natural course of business.

Advertising

Of the four countries we visited, Czechoslovakia was the least developed with respect to advertising. The Communist regime was extremely thorough in erasing private enterprise, and new enterprises that compete for the same customers have been slow in developing. Czechoslovak companies do not yet see the merit in advertising their product when no competitor exists. *Svobodne Slovo*, for instance, derives only 10 percent of its revenues from advertising.

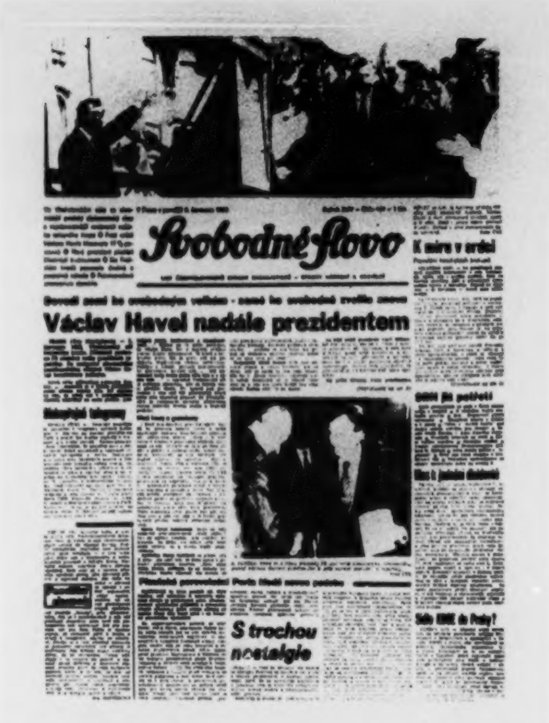
Compounding the problem for Prague's dailies is a new weekly composed entirely of advertisements called *Anonce*, which has siphoned off what little advertising exists for those dailies. Petr Pajas of Charter 77 said that he could not foresee advertising playing an important role in the newspaper business for several years.

Broadcasting

While one can expect some shakeout in the print media, independent broadcasting ventures are only in the planning stage. Czechoslovak television (CST) under the old regime was considered a crucial tool in shaping a public opinion in favor of the government. CST was never expected to make a profit and was run with practically no concern for the bottom line. Inefficient business procedures, massive overemployment and other ills went unchecked, yet the directors of television could always count on a hefty subsidy from the state.

For the Havel government, Czechoslovak television appears less an instrument of political control than it does a budget problem. The fat state subsidies have been slashed, and Jiri Kanturek, a former dissident and friend of Havel who now heads CST, is faced with the dilemma of improving and expanding programming while cutting costs. CST has been at loggerheads with the government over the extent of its subsidies and recently was fined by the government for overspending.

Kanturek himself is the third head of CST since the Velvet Revolution. The first two were dismissed when they refused to make the staff cutbacks that the government deemed necessary. The 25-crown-per-month tax that Czechs and Slovaks pay for receiving television never came close to covering costs, let alone providing enough profit to permit modernizing equipment.



Svobodné Slovo

Václav Havel nadále prezidentem

S trochou nostalgie

Foreign programming, while cheaper for Czechoslovakia than domestic programming, has also become painfully expensive for CST. The foreign programming provided on Channel Three has thus far remained free, but this will obviously not continue indefinitely. As mentioned earlier, the West German system of television is extremely attractive to the Czechs and Slovaks. Ideally, government subsidies would be cut and television would be supported by a heftier tax on television sets per household and by increased advertising. It will undoubtedly take much debate before such a tax can be raised, and given the relatively barren advertising scene in Czechoslovakia, substantial commercial sponsors for television are not likely to appear in the near future.

Richard Kraus, a young independent producer who hopes to launch his production house NTV as an independent television station, confronts a different set of problems from those Kanturek faces. Kraus' business savvy is what one would expect from a former dissident who for years had to scramble to produce anything on film and never really encountered commercial questions in a non-restrictive environment. He is now having problems raising money for NTV. He would like to attract shareholders and incorporate NTV, but until he actually receives a broadcasting license, no investor is seriously interested.

Ideally, Kraus said, there should be some sort of state fund from which independent broadcasters could draw. But given that the government can hardly afford to cover state television's costs, the establishment of such a fund may be unrealistic.

Havel himself is very eager to help independent broadcasting and is acquainted with the efforts of NTV. Kraus hopes that if he is awarded a license from the government, he might be able to borrow from the government in order to begin broadcasting. He also claims to have good contacts in Austria and West Germany from whom he could draw financial support, but only after he receives his license.

Another of Kraus' schemes is to show NTV-produced programs on closed-circuit, pay-per-view TV to amass capital and possibly attract West German investors. The impression he gave was one of an idealist with strong convictions about what he wanted to produce — programs giving new interpretations to history, shows on improving one's diet, broadcasts on the environment. But he did not know for certain how he would go about the broadcasting.

Quality of Journalism

Style and Objectivity

Opinions vary as to the quality of journalism in Czechoslovakia. Journalists now operate in a free environment, and many of the sentiments pent up so long under Communist control are now finding their way into print. Dissidents who formerly wrote expository pieces for *samizdat* (underground) publications, are now above ground and writing for publications that must don a new role in Czech and Slovak society. While the samizdat writers piqued consciences and attacked a corrupt system, writers for independent dailies must now be providers of information under a more or less legitimate system.

The transition from opinionated, polemical samizdat writing to objective news reporting has not been easy. First, independent journalists grew accustomed to seeing their role in society as baiting the authorities, uncovering scandals and "searching for sensations," as Havel rather critically phrased it at the Prague journalists' conference.

Second, as intellectuals and artists, the erstwhile underground journalists tend to see their mission as one of reflecting deeply on the pathologies of Czech and Slovak society and positing how they could be cured. Recounting "just the facts" — summarizing, for instance, the finance ministry's economic plan without giving an opinion on it and speculating about its impact on the national psyche — seems an unworthy undertaking to many of today's journalists. They regard American journalists who simply report what happens without tying events into a wider philosophical outlook as shallow. The line between reporting and editorializing, fairly well defined in American journalism, is not so clear for the Czechs. This is true of East European journalism in general.

Lidove Noviny is highly regarded for its objective news reporting. Its chiefs are close to Civic Forum but have scrupulously avoided letting their paper become a mere mouthpiece for that party, and they are often critical of the government. The quality of journalism at *Respekt* is also good, particularly its sharp-edged investigative reporting. Lamper evidently has no desire to transform *Respekt* from a weekly into a daily, preferring the weekly format because it lends itself more to opinion-forming commentaries than simple reporting. *Svobodny Zitrek* (Free Tomorrow), a spin-off of the Socialist Party's *Svobodne Slovo*, is another weekly that offers good editorials, commentaries, interviews and articles on cultural matters. *Studentske Listy*, the student newspaper in Prague, appears monthly and contains longer articles reflecting on current events. Another daily that is of higher quality than the average is *Mlada Fronta*, formerly affiliated with the Czech Communist Youth organization.

But the paucity of dailies that faithfully report the news without overindulging in editorializing cannot be overlooked. Ironically, *Rude Pravo*, the organ of the old Communist Party, has emerged, after an initial plunge in readership following the Velvet Revolution, as one of the better sources of daily news. It has many competent journalists, and now that they are less constrained by the need to convey the party line, the quality of the paper has improved greatly.

Foreign Coverage

Respekt editor Ivan Lamper said he considers foreign coverage his newspaper's strong suit and he has stationed contributing reporters in foreign capitals. But in general the lack of foreign news in Prague papers is astounding. There was, for instance, almost no coverage of the momentous events taking place as Germany moved toward reunification, a historical development that will significantly affect Czechoslovakia's future.

Most papers are too poor to station correspondents in foreign capitals, cannot afford Reuters or AP, and rely on the scanty releases from CTK, the Czech news service. *Lidove Noviny* has benefitted by receiving Reuters free of charge for a temporary period.

Specialty Journalists

Lamper of *Respekt* said that he would very much like to expand his staff but has been unable to find good journalists. Nevole at *Svobodne Slovo* had much the same complaint. Both Lamper and Nevole recognize Czechoslovakia's need for journalists trained to write about special subject matter — economics, science, sports and so on.

A good economic journalist is probably the rarest of commodities in Czechoslovakia, primarily because under the old regime economic activity was so stifled that there was little to write about, apart from the fulfillment of various centrally planned production quotas. Petr Pajas at Charter 77 pointed out that economic journalists will be vitally important in the coming years as Czechoslovakia makes its painful transition to a free market economy. Prices will rise, unemployment will rise, and shortages for the short term will occur. If the citizenry is to tolerate these sacrifices, it must be educated to accept them as an inevitable part of the economic transition.

Journalism Education

Most editors seemed to think that future journalists were to be found not in the journalism schools but in the professions. Nevole said he would rather have someone educated in law, history or economics and who can think and write than someone who has been inculcated with little more than journalistic theory. This was a view we found throughout Eastern Europe. Journalism schools have for so long been seen as places where students were trained in propaganda that practicing journalists hold journalism schools in very low regard. Journalism is often seen as a relatively easy academic field that attracts mediocre minds who cannot apply themselves for more difficult fields like law, history or economics.

Charles University in Prague houses Czechoslovakia's only journalism school, although journalism training is also offered at the Comenius University in Bratislava. The journalism faculty at Charles is being overhauled in a way that could alter practicing journalists' views toward university-trained journalists. Its journalism faculty has now been placed within the larger faculty umbrella of social sciences, which includes economics, politics, sociology and an institute for mass communications. The social sciences faculty has roughly 40 professors who have been elected by the students. Through these student elections, 26 former faculty members also lost their jobs. Many of these, but not all, were Communists. Faculty fired also included those who taught highly ideological courses. For example, instructors who taught "Journalism and Class Struggle," which the Communist government supported, lost their jobs. The dean of the School of Social Science, Cestmir Suchy, who is designing a new program for journalism education, was himself a practicing journalist associated with the "Prague Spring" of 1968. Suchy was purged after the Soviet invasion that year and worked as a window washer until the Velvet Revolution.

This former window washer is now planning a four-year journalism program. The first two years will entail a general education in the social sciences, much like the same period of undergraduate education in the United States. Two foreign languages will be required. (All the people we interviewed expressed Czechoslovakia's desperate need for English language instruction). The third and fourth years will involve more specialized journalistic training. Suchy felt that these years should emphasize very practical journalistic matters that have immediate application.

Barbara Koppolova, Suchy's vice-dean, and Jiri Jirak of the journalism department thought that some theoretical training was necessary in the education of a good journalist.

Suchy said that his two greatest priorities were to set up a solid curriculum and to establish a corpus of literature on journalism. Czechoslovakia needs basic journalism texts in Czech and Slovak. Translations of foreign journalism texts would be helpful, but no substitute for a quality text written by a Czech or Slovak.

Central European University

One of the most interesting possibilities for journalism education is through a proposed Central European University, an idea in the earliest planning stages which we discussed with Petr Pajas of Charter 77. In August 1990, a board was to organize this proposed university. The Central European University would offer courses to Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Hungarians and perhaps Yugoslavs, Austrians and Germans. Instruction would be in English, for post-graduates only, and the university would be located in a provincial Central European city. Pajas mentioned Bratislava as a possibility.

The Central European University would be the ideal forum to train practicing journalists in urgently needed specialties, most obviously economic journalism. An endowed chair at this university could help develop a program for post-graduate professional journalism training. This is a long-term scheme that may take five or more years before its proposals come to fruition.

Journalists' Associations

The Czechs have a tradition of strong journalists' associations. The International Organization of Journalists (IOJ), an organization of journalists from Communist countries, is based in Prague, with a good deal of money and property there. The Syndicate of Journalists, an independent association, was recently formed. The two organizations exist side by side in an atmosphere of mutual distrust. Some non-Communist journalists even suggested that the IOJ now serves as a front for several highly profitable businesses run by the Communists.

The Syndicate of Journalists is currently headed by Rudolf Zeman, deputy editor in chief of *Lidove Noviny.* Cestmir Suchy of the journalism school, one of its leaders, said he hoped the Syndicate could forge stronger ties between practicing journalists and journalism educators. This organization seems to be a fairly coherent group and training seminars in Czechoslovakia should probably be set up in cooperation with the Syndicate of Journalists. One complaint we heard about the Nieman Foundation's Conference of Journalists in July was that the Americans fashioned the program themselves and the Czechs felt somewhat left out.

Broadcasting

The quality of journalists and other personnel poses a greater problem in Czechoslovakia's broadcasting than in its print media. In the past, television was very tightly controlled by the Communists, with virtually every television employee of any import affiliated with the party. After the November 1989 revolution, a large number of employees left, leaving Czechoslovak television understaffed with experienced personnel. A large number of Communists turned coat with alacrity and the television system, desperate for experienced broadcasters, had no choice but to accept them. In fact, Jiri Kanturek said that experienced personnel are at such a premium that he really could not afford to send his people abroad for training.

Kanturek said expert advice was especially needed on television management. The Czechs and Slovaks have to learn about budgeting, how to attract advertisers, what to charge, and other elementary management techniques. CST also needs to train technical experts. The equipment at the television station was outdated, but Czechoslovakia has been so cut off from technological developments in the West that it has few people who could operate sophisticated new equipment even if such equipment were available. People need to be trained in equipment maintenance and in systems analysis so they can assess their own technological needs. In addition, they need some training on news programming. The quality of the news shows is not bad, but the shows are dull and below professional standards compared with their Western counterparts. The content of the news has, of course, radically changed since the Communists were overthrown, but the basic news format has not been altered much. The CST news journalists need to learn to conduct interviews and to do investigative reporting. Lack of coverage of foreign events remains a handicap.

Apart from the news, programming produced in Czechoslovakia leaves much to be desired. Entertainment programs that are not imported from the West are remarkably crude. A great many subjects that did not fit into the Communist view of the world were traditionally ignored, and people were kept completely in the dark about Western developments, including those in science and space exploration, for example. Environmental questions are of pressing importance to the Czechs and Slovaks, and the public needs to be enlightened about the free market economy as well. In order to break out of Communist-imposed provincialism, the Czechs need to produce programs about foreign countries. Two things are needed to facilitate such programs: people trained to produce them and new equipment.

Technology

The Press

All of the newspaper facilities in Czechoslovakia are fairly primitive by Western standards. *Rude Pravo*, long the favored newspaper under the Communists, has reasonably good production facilities. *Lidove Noviny*, which has received fairly extensive help from Western sources, is on the verge of computerizing its production. Last winter the paper circulated a substantial wish list of costly equipment which raised not a few eyebrows in Western circles. A close examination of the list revealed that much of what the paper requested might not have actually suited its needs.

Much of *Respekt's* production has been computerized, and the German Marshall Fund has expressed its intention to donate more equipment. *Respekt* has IBM PC's and Ventura layout software, but a pressing need for *Respekt* and for Czech and Slovak newspapers in general is an offprint scanner that would improve the quality of photos. Photographs tend to be of terrible quality in all the Czech and Slovak papers, with the subject matter of the photo sometimes unrecognizable.

Some high-quality printing exists in Czechoslovakia. In fact, the country exports books printed there for hard currency because of the good quality. But printing for domestic consumption tends to be poor. The new printing plant built by the Communists is among the best in Eastern Europe, and this is reflected in the quality of print one sees in *Rude Pravo* and *Respekt*, which is printed there. Melantrich's printing facilities, on the other hand, date from 1936, and the poor look of *Svobodne Slovo* and *Svobodny Zitrek* do not disguise this fact.

Broadcasting

The technological needs of the television station are perhaps more urgent and more basic than in other areas. Practically all CST's production and post-production equipment is antiquated. CST needs new lights, for which it lacks the hard currency. As stated above, CST is having difficulty simply meeting costs and cannot invest in new equipment. Since Czechoslovak entertainment productions tend to be poor, many Czechs and Slovaks have been tuning in to Channel Three, which broadcasts foreign programming. But Channel Three's impact is lessened because the CST lacks dubbing equipment. The viewer who does not understand French or English or Russian or German cannot get much out of Channel Three. CST also has no equipment that would enable it to provide programming for the deaf.

The Czechoslovak landscape is particularly hilly, Kanturek said, and the country's frequency spectrum is very narrow. As a result, a channel that wishes to broadcast across the entire country needs a series of repeaters to prevent the signal from being lost in the washboard topography of hills and valleys. Until such repeaters are in place, any new private channel will have to broadcast at an extremely local level. For this reason, the government would like to encourage the development of cable television, although as yet there has been little activity on this front.

The broadcasting signal itself presents the Czechs and Slovaks with a problem. Most of the West operates with the PAL signal, which has several advantages, particularly its adaptability to newly developed video equipment. In the early 1960s the Soviet bloc, at Moscow's insistence, adopted a different, French-developed system known as SECAM, which is not as adaptable as PAL to the new technologies. Kanturek said that if CST switches over to the PAL signal, which [illegible] would like to do, about half of the people in the country who now have color television will only be able to receive black and white.

Overview of Czechoslovak Media:

Publications

Lidove Noviny
[People's News]
Civic Forum's newspaper. It operated for a year or two in the underground and had on its staff many of those who make up the Czechoslovak government, including Vaclav Havel. It recently became a daily. While close to the government, it is not a "government newspaper."

Lidova Demokracie
[People's Democracy]
It is the daily of the Christian Democratic Party.

Mlada Demokracie
[Young Democracy]
Newspaper of the Youth League of the Christian Democratic Party.

Prace
[Work]
Daily of the trade union organization.

Rude Pravo
[Red Truth]
The Communist Party newspaper, formerly the most widely circulated paper in Czechoslovakia. Its checkered past has damaged its reputation, but its quality has improved in the last year.

Report
A new daily, published by the army in Czech and Slovak.

Svobodne Slovo
[Free Word]
Organ of the Socialist Party. It was allowed to publish under the old regime and is now seeking independence from the Socialist Party.

Obcansky Denik
[Civic Daily]
The Civic Forum's daily published in Prague. Editorially similar to *Lidove Noviny*.

Bulvar
[Boulevard]
Tabloid-style daily sold primarily in Prague.

Express
Tabloid-style daily sold primarily in Prague.

Mlada Fronta
[Youth Front]
Former daily of the Youth League, now apparently independent. Generally regarded as high quality.

Vecerni Praha
[Prague Evening]
Tabloid-style Prague daily.

Forum
Civic Forum's weekly.

Respekt
Highly regarded political weekly.

Pravo Lidu
[People's Rights]
Weekly of the Social Democrats.

Vokno

Recently surfaced independent political and cultural weekly. It was formerly a samizdat (underground) publication.

Studentske Listy

[Student Pages]

Bi-weekly student paper at Charles University in Prague. Politically independent.

Narodna Obroda

[National Rebirth]

Newly founded Slovak daily. Politically independent.

Verejnost

[Public]

Daily of Public Against Violence, the Slovakian branch of Civic Forum. Editorially similar to *Lidove Noviny.*

Svobodny Zitrek

[Free Tomorrow]

Political and cultural weekly published by Melantrich, publisher of *Svobodne Slovo.*

Smer

[Direction]

Sensationalist Slovak daily.

Reporter

Independent political weekly magazine. Often deals with historical debates.

Broadcasting

Television

State-owned Stations

There are three. Channel One is a pan-Czechoslovak broadcasting station. Channel Two is a national station, which broadcasts in both Czech and Slovak. Channel Three is the former Soviet army channel. It now broadcasts a variety of foreign programming from the Soviet Union, West Germany, the United States and France.

Radio

State-owned Stations

There are four stations broadcast nationwide. Of these, two are general interest and two play mostly music. There are also 10 regional stations.

Media Contacts

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Ivan Lamper
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Richard Kraus
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Jiri Kanturek
Director, Czechoslovak Television

Milan Bauman
Technical Director, Czechoslovak Television, Na Hrebenach 11, Praha 4

Cestmir Suchy
Rector, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Smetanovo nabr. 6, 110 00 Praha 1

Jan Jirak
Faculty of Journalism, Charles University

Barbara Kopplova
Vice-dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Daniel Butovec
Editor of *Echo*, Novinarska 3, Bratislava

Mico Ziak
Kulturny Zivot, Nezabudkova 50, Bratislava

The following Czechoslovak leaders addressed the East-West Journalists Conference in Prague, July 1-6, 1990, which was attended by Everette Dennis:

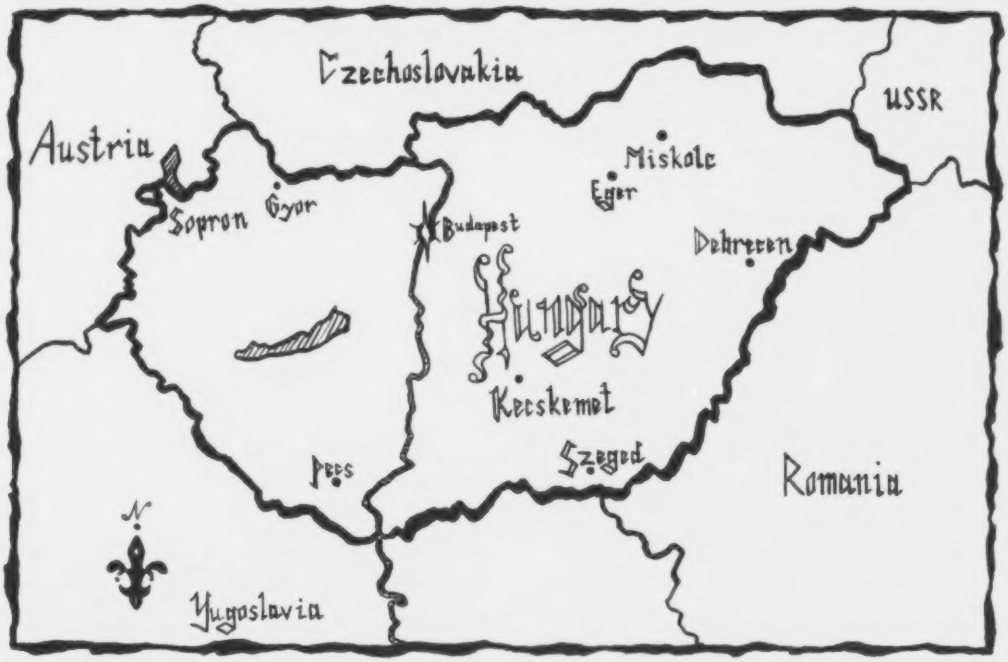
Vaclav Havel
President of Czechoslovakia

Jiri Ruml
Editor in Chief, *Lidove Noviny*

Jiri Dienstbier
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Jaroslav Koran
Mayor of Prague

Hungary


Czechoslovakia
USSR
Austria
Miskolc
Eger
Sopron
Gyor
Budapest
Debrecen
Hungary
Kecskemet
Szeged
Pecs
Romania
N
Yugoslavia

Hungary

Population: 10,727,000

Area: 92,981 sq.km. (35,890 sq.mi.)

GNP: 609.6 billion forints (US $32 billion) (1978, est.)

Literacy Rate: 97%

Language(s): Hungarian, German, Romanian, Serbo-Croat

Currency: The forint

Hungary:

In Context

Hungary has never fitted neatly into the group of nations that today comprise Eastern Europe. The most obvious aspect of Hungary's distinctiveness is that its inhabitants are not Slavs. In the 9th century, Magyar horsemen wandered westward from their original home in Siberia and settled in the fertile valley that is today Hungary. The Hungarian language resembles neither the Slavic tongues spoken to the north, east or south of the country, nor the German spoken to the west. In 1526 the Hungarian and Austrian crowns were united, and Hungary consequently developed a special status within the sprawling Hapsburg Empire.

In the modern era, when most Slavic kingdoms were in decline, having fallen under Russian, German or Turkish domination, the Hungarian crown grew in stature. In 1867, Hungary attained a sort of parity with the Austrians in the Hapsburg Empire, which became known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After the collapse of the Dual Monarchy in World War I, Hungary was proclaimed an independent republic in 1918, and its territory was greatly reduced. Large Hungarian populations fell under Romanian and Yugoslav rule, a source of irritation among these countries to this day.

Hungary had brushes with dictatorships of the Communist (Bela Kun) and authoritarian (Admiral Horthy) kinds between the world wars. In 1941, the Hungarians joined the Axis powers in declaring war on the Soviet Union. After the Soviets drove the Germans out of Hungary in 1945, a republican government was briefly established, only to be overthrown by a Soviet-inspired Communist coup in 1948.

Communist rule never took hold in Hungary to the extent that it did among Hungary's neighbors to the east. A bloody, anti-Communist revolt in 1956 was crushed by the Soviets, but the government of Janos Kadar, whom the Soviets installed that year, had in it the seeds of reform. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Kadar's government tried to move slowly away from the Soviet bloc and closer to a Western model. Business and political ties with the West were encouraged, new laws on joint ventures enacted, and travel restrictions relaxed.

In 1988, Kadar, who had ruled for 32 years, was ousted and the pace of change accelerated. The Communist Party seemed to collapse from within. A law legalizing political parties further opened the political spectrum, and in May 1989 the body of Imre Nagy, the Hungarian leader who had led the 1956 revolt against Soviet-style Communism, was exhumed and given a hero's burial.

In October 1989 the red star was removed from the Hungarian flag, along with the barbed wire that had separated them from their old partners, the Austrians. This so-called "green border" became the escape route for thousands of East Germans fleeing to the West.

When the Hungarians refused to cooperate with the East German government in preventing the German exodus, the bankruptcy of the Soviet bloc was manifest. The Iron Curtain had become porous.

With the red star removed, the Hungarians turned to the less dramatic but more arduous task of turning their economy into one resembling that of their Western neighbors. Although euphemistically described in such upbeat phrases as Hungary's "return to Europe," the process brought with it economic austerity and accompanying social dislocation.

The British historian Ralf Dahrendorf has written that the economic transition unavoidably entails a valley of tears. Already the Hungarian economy, which only a few years ago seemed robust, has showed signs of withering. Inflation has increased greatly and standards of living have fallen. A debt burden of over $20 billion, the highest per capita in Eastern Europe, will weigh heavily on the economy for years to come.

Faced with these difficulties, the Hungarians went to the polls in March 1990 to vote in the first free, multi-party parliamentary elections in that country since the 1940s. Six parties entered Parliament. The Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), the largest party, built a governing coalition with two smaller parties, while the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) and the Alliance of Young Democrats (FIDESZ) headed up the opposition. The much-reduced Communist Party, now renamed the Hungarian Socialist Party, is also in opposition.

Now that the old enemy has been removed from power, fundamental cleavages in Hungarian society have resurfaced. Hungary, in contrast to its more industrialized and bourgeois neighbor Czechoslovakia, has traditionally been an agricultural land of peasants, less familiar with and receptive to industrialization of the market variety.

In recent years a degree of free enterprise has been introduced to Hungary with a gusto unmatched elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Mark Palmer, the former American ambassador to Hungary who left his post in order to engage in business ventures there, compared Hungary to California during the gold rush. But now that the boom has slowed, demonstrating at least that there cannot be boom without bust and prosperity without hardships, the rural segment of society has reasserted itself.

The MDF, a center-right party that rode the wave of discomfort with laissez-faire economics to the prime ministership, has heeded some calls to slow down the economic transition. Many Hungarians who support the MDF coalition have begun to look inward at their Hungarian distinctiveness and are concluding that what the country needs is not unalloyed capitalism, but a more corporatist economy based on ideals of national unity. National pride, they assert, not the greedy dreams of self-aggrandizement, is needed to motivate Hungarians to work for a more prosperous future.

But there is an urban and urbane Hungary, represented most clearly by the intellectuals and journalists, many of them Jewish, who lead the opposition SZDSZ and FIDESZ parties. These groups have little patience with the nostalgia that characterizes some elements in the MDF. Hungary's transition to a free market economy, they argue, will of course be painful but the experience of the 20th century shows that this is the course best for all Hungarians.

This oppositional strain is strong in Hungary's press, which has not hesitated to criticize the government. The government has shown itself to be quite thin-skinned in facing this criticism and has tried to bring the liberal press into line. Hungary's press, which played an important role in bringing about the changes resulting from Hungary's recent round of multi-party elections, now finds itself distrustful of, and distrusted by, the government that emerged from those elections.

The Task Force Report on Hungarian Media

Legal Structure and Legal Developments

The Hungarians, like the people of the other East European nations we visited, have broad agreement about the need for freedom of speech and freedom of the press — general matters addressed in our own First Amendment. Censorship has ceased to exist, but even two years before the Communist Party lost its control it had allowed the media to liberalize to an extent unheard of in neighboring Czechoslovakia, Poland and East Germany.

The new press law has been before the Parliament in draft form since December 1989, but the committee charged with drafting the law must also handle cultural, educational and sports affairs. Overloaded with work, the committee has been unable to move forward quickly. More importantly, partisan politics have blocked significant progress with the press law since the beginning of the summer. Apart from the press law, a separate media law is expected sometime in the next few years.

Press Law

The official press law in Hungary dates from 1986, but has been rendered all but meaningless by subsequent developments. In it, more emphasis was given to journalists' responsibilities and obligations than to their rights. Freedom of the press was guaranteed separately, in the constitution, but through a variety of means the Communist government was able to strangle any independent publication in its infancy. In practice, almost all newspapers were controlled directly or indirectly by the Communist Party. Its agency of control, however, the Propaganda and Press Department of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, was abolished in the spring of 1989. The old regime squelched independent publications and even occasionally registered publications by setting up four roadblocks, each at different points in the chain of newspaper production and consumption. The operations of editing, publishing, printing and distribution, usually integrated in Western countries, were separated in the majority of Hungarian newspapers and magazines. This structural distortion remains largely intact today as a legacy of the Communist period.

Under the old regime, this separation of operations meant that a publication could be blocked by a printer who said he had no press time to take on additional work; by a publisher who said he lacked the money to pay for the required newsprint; by an editor who decided, on second thought, that the oppositional tone of an article was ill-advised; and, lastly, by a distributor (actually the Hungarian postal service) who said that given train scheduling and capacity problems it would be impossible to distribute the paper in question. Thus while the press law itself did not read as a strikingly illiberal document, these practical obstacles had to be cleared before one could speak of a free press.

The Hungarians we interviewed, like other East Europeans, were concerned primarily with these practical obstacles and not with legal codes. Endre Aczel, formerly co-editor in chief of *Kurir,* a popular new daily with a non-partisan focus, showed little interest in the press law, seeing it as an abstract affair that would not significantly affect his publication.

Libel law is poorly designed in Hungary today, and will probably be amended in the new press law.

Under the present law, libel is punished in a rather unusual way: Offenders, if found guilty, pay a small fine directly to the state, rather than to the person affected. No provisions for damages exist. Since Hungarian journalism has taken on a rather rough-and-tumble character over the past year, and the line between freedom and license seems unclear for Hungarian journalists, this deficiency is problematic.

Registration of newspapers is a matter that the upcoming press law will have to address. Until June 1989, newspapers were required to register at the Office of Press Administration. Today a routinized court registration is compulsory only for the publisher.

More problematic has been the recent tendency of the government, led by the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), to throw its weight around in the hopes of intimidating the press. MDF has come in for harsh criticism for its economic and other policies, and has taken umbrage at what it considers unfair attacks from a media establishment staffed in large part by sympathizers with SZDSZ and FIDESZ, MDF's primary opponents. High-ranking members of MDF have rumbled ominously in public about what will happen if journalists continue with their criticism. The governing party has also played hardball in making sure that when a newspaper acquires a foreign investor, that investor will have political views in accord with those of MDF. Presumably the investor will then use its influence within the paper on MDF's behalf.

The case of *Magyar Nemzet* (Hungarian Nation) illustrates this last point well. The *Nemzet*, known for the past few years as a social democratic and daringly anti-Communist newspaper, started looking for a foreign investor some time ago. It found a Swedish group, Marieberg, and entered into negotiations. Since legal boundaries and ownership of the paper were terribly unclear, however, the MDF-dominated government succeeded in intervening. It blocked the Swedish deal, and then pushed the *Nemzet* into a deal with the French Hersant group, known for its conservative daily *Figaro.*

The *Nemzet's* editorial board protested vigorously, and things dragged on for most of the summer of 1990; a three-person committee was appointed to evaluate the Swedish and French proposals. When the committee declared in favor of Hersant in August, the MDF-led government wasted no time in propelling the deal toward completion. When the editorial board discovered that the deal's terms conflicted with the bylaws of the *Nemzet* that provided them with veto powers regarding new investors, the board resigned en masse, vowing to take the case to court. At last report, Hersant had acquired a 40 percent stock in the *Nemzet.*

Magyar Nemzet

ALAPÍTOTTA: PETHŐ SÁNDOR

Előtérben a nyugati segélylehetőségek

Moszkvában vendégeskedik az EK-bizottság elnöke

What legal ground did the government have in meddling with the *Nemzet's* affairs to begin with? Apparently none, but a new press law is needed to iron out questions of ownership, government supervision, foreign investment and so on. Since MDF controls the Parliament that will pass the new law, it is hard to imagine that it will pass a law limiting its own powers; it is equally hard to imagine that the opposition will sit quietly as this goes on. This is why the new press law is still pending. The media are the victims of political gridlock.

Broadcasting Law

The 1986 press law did not cover aspects of broadcasting, such as cable television, private ownership of broadcasting equipment and allocation of frequencies. Thus far the new, non-Communist government has been unable to devise a satisfactory legal framework. In January 1990 the right to broadcast was extended to all individuals, but concrete matters that must be resolved before private broadcasting can actually begin have yet to be addressed in the fractious Hungarian Parliament. Zoltan Jakab, a senior adviser at Hungarian Television (MTV) with whom we met, was recently charged with producing a draft of a new broadcasting law, but there is no guarantee that his effort will not fall victim to political infighting, as others' efforts did earlier.

State-owned Hungarian Televison (MTV) and Hungarian Radio (MR) have retained a practical monopoly of the airwaves, although several small private broadcasting initiatives do exist. MTV operates two channels, which broadcast 14 hours per day, as well as two regional television stations. MR operated three national radio stations named after the famous Hungarians Kossuth, Petofi and Bartok. The government, currently dominated by MDF, can exert a great deal of influence over state broadcasting; the prime minister has the right to nominate the chairpersons of MTV and MR, as well as the chairperson of MTI, the state-owned news agency. Once nominated, the president then confirms their appointments.

There is talk of privatizing one or more of the television channels and some of the radio stations, but there is bound to be much wrangling over the issue, and the basic legal framework essential for privatization is still not in place. The general consensus seems to be that Hungary must retain at least one state channel. Parliament has established an Examining Committee for Privatization of the Media, but it has not made much progress. As *Magyar Nemzet* reported on July 3, 1990, "There is no appropriate legal regulation for privatization, and there is no well thought-out conception of how privatization should proceed."

The Hungarian government is also pondering the creation of a third channel, which would be fully commercial. The idea has aroused Western interest, and Italian media mogul Silvio Berlusconi and other large Western media players have offered large sums of money for full control over the channel.

Independent Broadcasting

Hungary has a handful of private commercial television ventures, and is more advanced in this regard than any other East European country. Balaton Channel, a TV station based on Hungary's Lake Balaton, broadcasts in German during the summer months to serve the large German tourist population. Nap TV (TV Today) is a commercial venture connected to the newspaper *Mai Nap*; Rupert Murdoch has a substantial stake in the venture. It broadcasts only three mornings weekly, renting the broadcast frequency from one of MTV's two channels. The United States Information Agency (USIA) has promised Nap TV a satellite dish that will enable it to use American Worldnet programming.

This practice of renting time on state channels and transmission facilities is probably the model that will have to be followed elsewhere until private broadcasters are able to amass sufficient capital to found truly new independent channels. Radio Danubius is radio's version of Balaton Channel. It broadcasts in German during the summer and in Hungarian for the rest of the year. Its signal now covers almost all of Hungary. Radio Calypso and Radio Juventus Balaton are two other commercial stations that primarily broadcast music. Radio Bridge was founded last summer with Swedish and Canadian capital. It is aimed at business people in Hungary and transmits a great deal of Voice of America programming. Originally the station was licensed for just the three days of President Bush's visit, but after that time they simply stayed on the air.

There is undoubtedly a lot of money to be made in commercial broadcasting in Hungary, but the legal environment has prevented many ventures from emerging. A backlog of over 100 applications for broadcast licenses and scores more for radio have accumulated. Maxwell, Murdoch and Berlusconi, for example, are all anxious to get in. The Hungarian Parliament, however, is hopelessly divided over how to go about setting up an FCC-type body to assign frequencies and regulate broadcasting generally. Oppositional parties are concerned that the MDF may try to dominate this body as well. Until matters are settled, Hungary has established an absolute moratorium on frequency allocation. Those companies whose applications were approved before the moratorium was imposed have the private broadcasting market, at least for now, to themselves.

Programming

Programming has been a much-contested issue lately. The MDF-led coalition has been accused of driving out a number of state television and radio employees who were critical of the government, and then replacing them with MDF-sympathizers who would insure that programming, particularly news coverage, would throw a favorable light on the government. The Parliament has been trying to set up an independent supervisory body that would administer the state-run broadcasting systems and handle programming matters. Each party, however, has its own idea about how such a supervisory committee ought to be composed.

Since many people in high positions in the broadcasting system, at one time or another, made their compromises with the Communist regime, it's easy for one party or the other to object to prospective members whose views may not be to their liking on the grounds that he or she is a former Communist collaborator. The MDF meanwhile, which feels that the media as a whole are biased against its policies, has insisted that no members of the supervisory committee be employees of MTV, MR or MTI. At last report, the chances of any committee being created were slim.

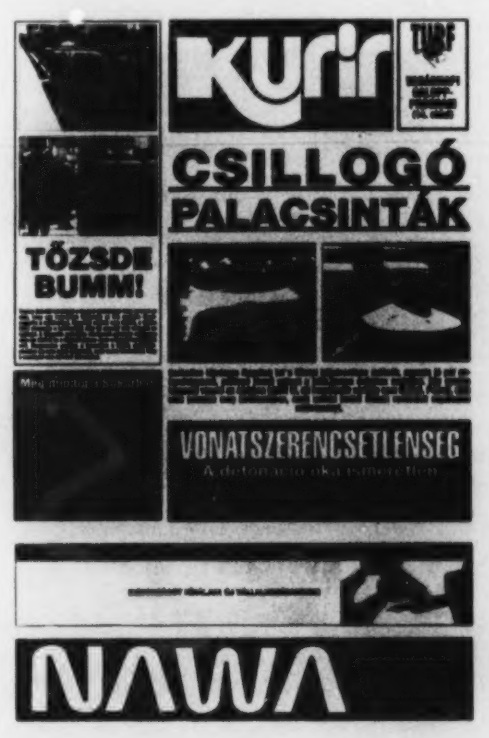
Press Independence

Compared to the other East European countries, Hungary's private sector press has been developing rapidly. In fact, there has been a boom in private publications. Since the government encouraged entrepreneurial activities, every would-be publisher felt that his time had come, and new newspapers and magazines cropped up almost every day.

One of the more significant private publications is *Heti Vilaggazdasag* (Weekly World Economy). The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce helped launch this weekly newsmagazine more than a decade ago, in 1979. It has developed into a steady profit-maker and is now beginning to spin off new publications of its own, such as the cultural-political journal *2000*, which began publication in 1989.

Reform, a popular tabloid weekly founded in late 1988, has done extremely well, selling hundreds of thousands of copies despite its high cover price. Rupert Murdoch, who has a 40 to 50 percent stake in the enterprise, has helped it to launch a daily, *Mai Nap* (Today), as well as a sports weekly, *Sport-Plusz*.

Kurir, a tabloid daily launched in May 1990, is already selling 130,000 copies, about 80,000 in its morning edition and 50,000 in the afternoon one. Organized as a joint enterprise, with 20 percent Austrian ownership, the company has acquired an impressive array of newsroom equipment and is confident that it will be expanding its publication line soon.

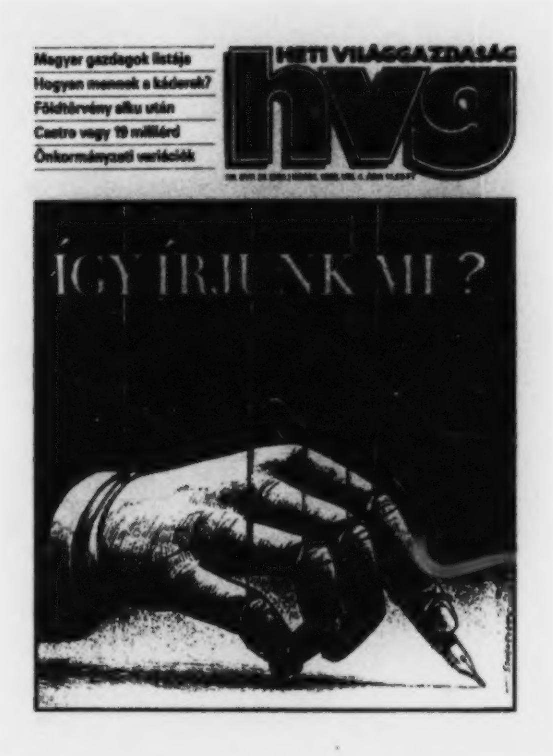


A number of important independent political and cultural papers, such as *Beszelo* (Speaker), that were formerly in the underground have come above ground, taking advantage of the new media environment. *Datum*, Hungary's first independent daily, recently folded because it was unable to turn a profit.

Business and Economics of the Media

Ownership

Ownership questions are clearer in Hungary than elsewhere in Eastern Europe. This is particularly true of private commercial ventures, in which ownership is not



complicated by longstanding relationships with the Communist Party, the state and semi-official bodies; entrepreneurs have had clear title from day one.

In the case of media properties owned by the state or the former Communist Party, ownership questions are much more difficult to resolve. In the countryside, for example, numerous small local newspapers were run by the Communist Party while being supported by state subsidies. Now that Communists no longer run Hungary's government, is it right that ownership of these newspapers should be inherited by the Communists who managed them? Should managers who financed their operations with public monies be allowed to sell these newspapers for their own profit, or for the profit of the Communist (now Socialist) Party?

Foreign Ownership

The Hungarians have embraced foreign ownership of the media with a gusto unseen elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Foreign investment, in fact, may not even be covered in the upcoming press law. Rather, the media may be treated as just another sector of the Hungarian economy, without being separated out for legal privileges or restrictions. The current law on foreign investment allows for 100 percent foreign ownership of enterprises doing business in Hungary; a previous law limited foreign ownership to 49 percent. If one considers that Yugoslavia is only now pondering whether it should allow foreigners to own as much as 25 percent of a media operation, Hungary's boldness becomes clear.

The special nature of the media as a political, social and cultural institution, however, makes it likely that some strictures on foreign investment will be enacted. Gyorgy Balo of Hungarian Television, Gabor Bencsik of the National Association of Hungarian Journalists (MUOSZ), and Andras Szekfu, lecturer and researcher in media matters, all stated that they envisioned some limits on cross-ownership (i.e., newspapers and broadcast properties) or on absolute percentage. Szekfu believed that national content requirements, like those found in Canada, might also be put into effect.

Part of the sensitivity to foreign investment springs from the bold and provocative acquisition in March 1990 by West German Axel Springer of seven regional newspapers formerly owned by the Communist Party. The Party, in effect, dissolved in the fall of 1989, when it was renamed the Hungarian Socialist Party, and lost the great majority of its members. But its regional newspapers, which totaled about 20, continued publishing, still using state subsidies. In March, when Hungary was preoccupied with its first multi-party elections in 40 years, Springer stepped in with an offer to take over the debt of the newspapers if they signed over ownership to him. Almost overnight, the deal was made; no bids from other investors were solicited, and the individuals who signed on behalf of the papers did so even though their legal authority remained unclear.

The Springer affair, as it was called by Hungarians, was much discussed during the period when we were in Budapest. There was a parliamentary inquiry on the matter and while there was no definitive finding about just what had happened when the papers changed hands, the parliamentarians issued a stern warning that such transactions should not take place in the future without clearer public understandings. Many press people with whom we spoke disapproved of the transaction, mainly because of secrecy and genuine controversy about whether leaders of the Communist Party should be able to claim ownership of any enterprise.

The former Communists auctioned off 49 percent of each of the remaining 13 local dailies, with government approval, to French and German companies. The proceeds of the sale went to charity.

Transactions involving other foreign investors have aroused less controversy. Rupert Murdoch invested $4 million in the tabloid *Reform*, securing a 50 percent interest, and also bought half of *Mai Nap*. The remaining shares in these papers are controlled by a consortium of Hungarian state organs. Robert Maxwell also entered into a joint venture with the Hungarian government, buying a 40 percent share of the government-owned daily, *Magyar Hirlap* (Hungarian Courier); he also recently acquired 40 percent of *Esti Hirlap* (Evening Courier).

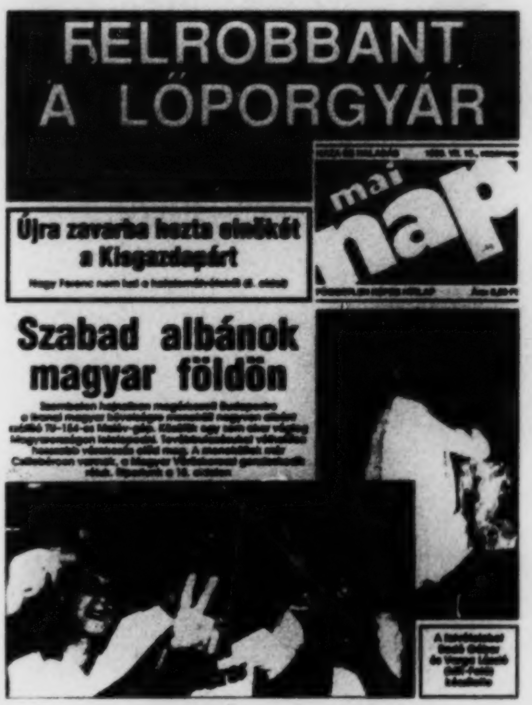
George Soros, the Hungarian-American financier, entered into discussions early in 1990 to purchase *Magyar Nemzet* (Hungarian Nation), offering $850,000, but his offer was rejected as too low. As mentioned above, *Nemzet* has become embroiled in a dispute with the Hungarian government over what sort of foreign investor it should choose. *Nepszabadsag* (People's Freedom), former organ of the Communist Party, recently allowed Bertelsmann, the West German publishing concern, to acquire a 41 percent interest in the company, which was simultaneously transformed from a state enterprise into a stock corporation. *Szabad Fold* (Free Land) a profitable weekly targeted at the rural population, privatized and sold 49 percent of its shares to the Central European Development Corporation, headed by former U.S. ambassador Mark Palmer. McGraw-Hill has also launched titles on the magazine market, as has Playboy, Burda and Springer.

Maxwell, Murdoch and Berlusconi, as mentioned above, are eager to enter the Hungarian broadcasting market but are being held up by the moratorium on frequency allocation, not to mention the unresolved legal environment for foreign broadcasters. Berlusconi, some have suggested, wisely stayed out of print media in order to avoid possible later restrictions on foreign cross-ownership.

In cable television, an American-Hungarian joint venture, led by Chase Enterprises (which has already signed a cable deal with the Polish government), has been formed with the goal of wiring various local cable systems into a national system. About 300,000 households have been connected thus far.

Printing

Whereas diversity characterizes the ownership of publications in Hungary, the actual printing facilities are astonishingly, perhaps unwisely, concentrated. In 1990 the Pallas Company and the Newspaper Publishing Enterprise (Hirlapkiado Vallalat), which were already Hungary's dominant printing houses, merged into a single gigantic, state-owned enterprise. It has a near-monopoly position, printing about 80 percent of Hungary's dailies. The printing company's chairman, Jozsef Horti, is known to be a close friend of the Prime Minister, MDF-leader Jozsef Antall, and to have played a decisive role in backing the Hersant group's bid for the daily *Magyar Nemzet*.



FELROBBANT A LŐPORGYÁR

mai nap

Újra zavarba hozta elnökét a Kisgazdapárt

Szabad albánok magyar földön

Newsprint

Paper supplies are, for the present, adequate in Hungary for the needs of the press. Paper, formerly allocated through a state monopoly that often took politics into consideration when reviewing a publication's request for supplies, is now essentially a market commodity, available in virtually unlimited supplies to those who can pay the going price. That price, however, is rising because the Soviet Union, Hungary's principal supplier of newsprint, has begun reducing its shipments. Beginning in January 1991, when Hungarian-Soviet trade will be conducted with hard currency, companies wishing to purchase paper will have to find a way to convert their forints (the Hungarian currency) into dollars or German marks.

Distribution

Until recently, distribution of the printed press constituted a legal monopoly of the Hungarian State Post; not only does the Post charge a whopping 30 to 35 percent of the distributed product's cover price for its services, but it is also inefficient in actually getting the job done. Papers are often delivered late, or not at all. Politics may or may not play a role in deciding how well a particular paper fares.

The Post's grip on the distribution system helps to explain foreign purchases of existing Hungarian newspaper titles, even when those titles have behind them little more than sickly, poorly administered publications. It is apparently a nightmare trying to persuade the postal service to commence delivery of a new publication. Form after form must be completed, and often Hungarians are content enough with just continuing their subscriptions to the same papers they have always received. Thus many foreign investors, such as Springer, have sidestepped the problem by buying already existing papers, almost regardless of their troubles, since they are already entrenched within the distribution system.

The poor distribution system has plagued new publications such as Ivan Baba's *Datum*, for instance, a daily that was highly respected for its political integrity. It could not expand its readership because the postal office insisted that it could distribute only 10,000 copies of *Datum* each day.

Several private firms, both Hungarian and foreign, have begun to establish their own distribution networks since the Post's legal monopoly was abolished in January 1990. MediaPrint, an Austrian company, has already got a number of newsstands on Budapest's streets and plans to invest several million dollars over the next year in expanding its operation; at present, it sells mostly non-Hungarian news products, although it still stocks the popular weeklies *Reform* and *Heti Vilaggazdasag* (Weekly World Economy), as well as a few other Hungarian papers.

The Post, meanwhile, announced in August that it planned a partial privatization of its own newsstand network. *Kurir*, a new privately owned tabloid, has taken steps to address the distribution problem on its own; it hires young men and women to hawk its product on the streets of Budapest.

Given Hungary's bold entrepreneurial spirit, distribution problems are likely to abate.

Readership

Sales in the Hungarian press have fallen in the last two years, largely because of drastic price increases brought on by inflation and rising publication costs. A

MAGYAR NARANCS
10.
KÓSTOLÓ

large part of the Hungarian population has also suffered a decline in real income in recent months, and often no longer buys more than one newspaper, as was once common. There is also an overabundance of newspapers on the Hungarian market, and many will certainly go under in the next year or two. *Nepszabadsag* and *Reform* have the largest circulations, with 350,000 and 400,000 respectively.

Many newspapers with low circulations were kept alive with government subsidies that are now being drastically cut or eliminated altogether. The situation with subsidies is a bit murkey these days. Private newspapers such as *Kurir, Reform, Mai Nap* or *Pesti Hirlap* have never been recipients of such subsidies. Formerly state-owned or partly state-owned papers such as *Nepszabadsag, Magyar Hirlap* and *Magyar Nemzet* have gradually ceased to receive government subsidies. These papers, and many others under the old regime, were hugely overstaffed, and if they were allowed to fold, the resulting unemployment would be serious.

Advertising

Advertising as a source of revenue for the media has been better developed in Hungary than in Czechoslovakia and Poland, but not as well as in Yugoslavia. Some papers derive about 30 percent of their revenues from advertising. Until recently, advertising was highly centralized, with a single state agency dominating the industry. Small, privately owned advertising agencies have begun to appear, however, and international concerns are beginning to show up, too. The American firm Oglivy and Mather, for instance, has an office in Budapest.

Many newspapers and journals handle advertising entirely in-house. The better ones are swamped with requests for space, and seem unable to meet the demand, perhaps out of a fear that any further increase in ad lineage would drive readers away. *Heti Vilaggazdasag* (Weekly World Economy), has supposedly turned would-be advertisers away, while *Magyar Nemzet* (Hungarian Nation), a respected daily, apparently has a long waiting list of advertisers.

Hungarian Radio and Television established a specific sales arm in the 1970s, called RTV Enterprises, that has handled advertising. Current law limits commercial advertisements to six minutes each hour for both Hungarian television and radio, but this may change.

In general, an increase in the importance of advertising for media revenues seems likely. But Hungarian readers and viewers may prove intolerant of advertising density that begins to approach Western levels. It is also a question whether the Hungarian economy, weak as it is already, and quite possibly headed into still worse times, can support even the modest advertising market that exists today.

Quality of Journalism

Style and Objectivity

The quality of the Hungarian media is about the same as in the rest of Eastern Europe, or perhaps a little better. There are stridently nationalist voices in the Hungarian media, but they are a minority — the situation in this respect does not approach that in Yugoslavia. Hungarian journalists tend to be bolder and quicker to report stories than their more cautious Czechoslovak counterparts. The newspaper tabloid format, which has proved successful in Hungary, has also forced the Hungarians to be concise in their reportage.

Party divisions are occasionally evident in Hungarian journalism, but newspapers are generally not seen as mouthpieces for the various political factions, as is often the case in Poland. Indeed, the Hungarians seem to desire a less politicized press. Party newspapers do not sell particularly well. *Magyar Forum,* the paper of the MDF, was generally regarded as low in quality, and readership dropped so much that the paper had to temporarily suspend publication. *Beszelo* (Speaker) and *Magyar Narancs* (Hungarian Orange) are regarded as good political papers; *Beszelo* is loosely affiliated with the liberal opposition party SZDSZ, but its circulation, like that of *Narancs* (associated with FIDESZ), is low, and neither paper has much hope of converting into a daily.

Nepszabadsag, the former Communist daily, has emerged as one of the finest dailies in Hungary, just as *Rude Pravo,* the Czech Communist daily, has in Czechoslovakia. Both cases suggest that the Communist dailies had good journalists working for them who, without a repressive editorial policy, are able to produce a good paper.

The Hungarians show a liking for *Kurir* and

MAGYAR HÍRLAP

Reform, which offer nonpartisan political reporting, sports, scantily-clad women and an assortment of popular fluff stories.

Explicit sexual material has become very visible on the Hungarian media scene, and is the topic of lively debate in the Parliament. Commercially, though, these publications have been undeniably successful.

The newsstands provide a wide variety of publications, ranging from a Hungarian edition of *Playboy*, to a Hungarian TV guide to literary journals, women's and family magazines, to publications for car buffs, pet lovers, church-goers and so on. Sensationalism tends to run high in the Hungarian press, and there have been complaints of unpunished libel and defamation.

Foreign Coverage and Specialty Journalism

Hungarian newspapers generally cannot afford extensive staffs of foreign correspondents, although some of the government-supported papers such as *Nepszabadsag* and *Magyar Nemzet* have correspondents in some of the world's major capitals. *Heti Vilaggazdasag* carries many pieces from free-lancers stationed abroad.

There is a scarcity of foreign correspondents in the Hungarian broadcasting organizations, too. MTV has just one, stationed in Moscow. Hungarian Radio has correspondents in Moscow, New York, Paris and Bonn. News agencies from abroad are all channeled through the official Hungarian state news agency, MTI, which will continue to enjoy monopoly status until the end of 1990. Consequently, individual newspapers, radio and television stations receive only those AP, Reuters and UPI releases that are passed on by MTI.

There is no shortage of journalists in Hungary able to cover specialty subjects like agriculture, economics, science and culture.

Journalists Associations

Associations in the Hungarian media have grown in number over the last two years, and have distanced themselves from the Communist Party and its successor, the Hungarian Socialist Party. Plummeting subsidies and growing political polarization, however, have weakened the associations, old and new alike. The National Association of Hungarian Journalists (MUOSZ), long the principal representative body for journalists, has done well in improving its image and disassociating itself from its ties to the Communist Party, but it suffers from financial difficulties and is also losing members now that membership is no longer required.

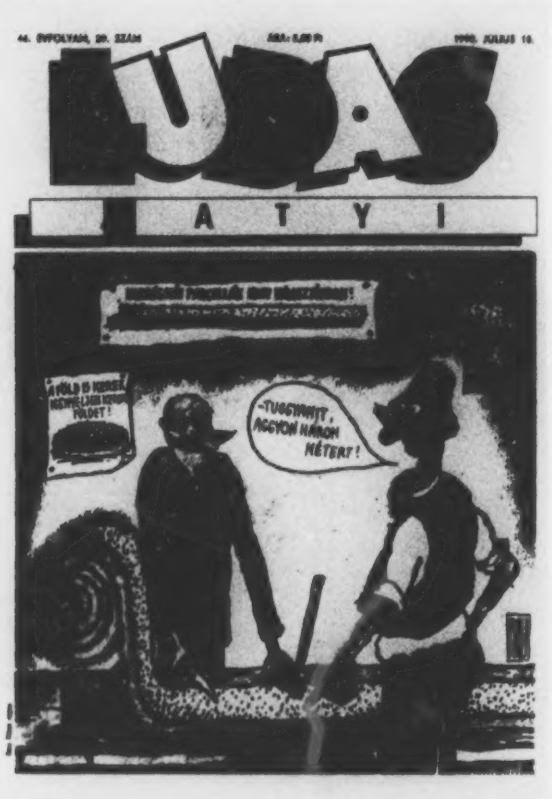
An example of the divisiveness of media issues in Hungary today is the recent resignation of Laszlo Robert as president of MUOSZ. Robert quit because the Association decided to endorse the mandate for the television and radio committee to monitor broadcasting fairness. As stated above, the composition of this committee itself became such a political issue that the committee was never formed.

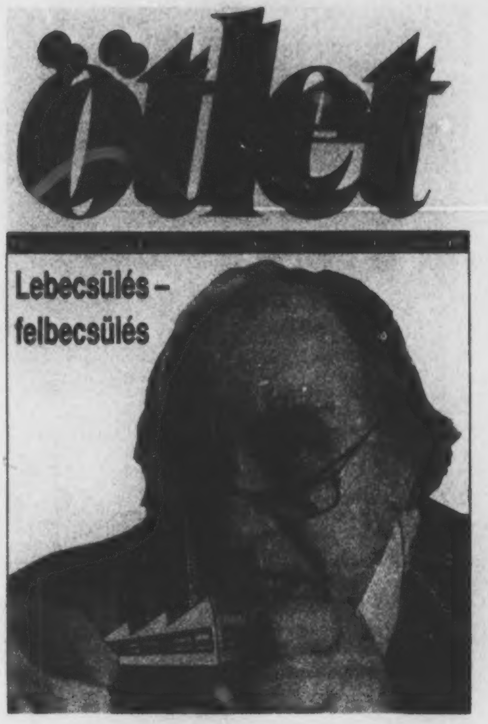
A "TV Chamber" was established in recent months as an organization of reform-minded television journalists. The Chamber, however, is seen by some as affiliated with SZDSZ, and so a rival Association of TV Programmers, which leans toward MDF, was recently founded.

In April the reporters and editors of MTI, the Hungarian News Agency, set up an organization of their own, the Hungarian News Agency's Journalists' Chamber, presumably to stand up for objectivity in the face of external pressures.

Journalism Education

Education of journalists in Hungary was the near-monopoly, until recently, of the National Association of





Hungarian Journalists. All journalists were required to enroll in courses offered by the Association. No school of journalism or communications has existed in Hungary since 1956. Changes, however, are planned. The Lorand Eotvos University in Budapest (ELTE) is proceeding with plans to start a journalism program. First courses began in September 1990, while a full-fledged major in communications should be in place by 1992, according to Pal Tamas, one of the project's organizers.

In the meantime, ELTE will be cooperating with MUOSZ in providing instruction to would-be journalists on a provisional basis. About 150 students will receive three months of schooling, beginning in September 1990 under this program. Although Gabor Bencsik of MUOSZ stated in an interview that the Association intended to proceed for the next several years with its course offerings, financial problems might make this impossible.

In the southern Hungarian city of Pecs, meanwhile, the English department of Janus Pannonius University plans to expand its already-existing program in mass media studies. It may receive assistance from American public and private sources. The University in Szeged, not far from Pecs, is also planning to begin a journalism program. The College of Cinema and Theatre in Budapest has been offering instruction in cinematography for some time.

Generally, Hungary's education of journalists is in flux. A surprising number of institutions have started thinking seriously about founding new programs, although it seems too early to say how serious or feasible all these proposals are and what philosophical and pedagogical approaches they will take. The Hungarians, along with the Czechoslovaks and Poles, are discussing the creation of a Central European University, a post-graduate school that may well offer instruction in journalism (please see the report on media in Czechoslovakia).

Broadcasting

Hungarian broadcasting is generally quite good.

News programs are fairly objective in their coverage, despite occasional allegations of government pressure to cast a favorable light on its policies. There are many news talk shows that candidly address the day's most contentious issues. There is probably an overabundance of news talk shows, according to Janos Horvat, a television news personality and senior adviser at MTV. This is largely due to the political turmoil that Hungary has gone through in recent years as well as to the fact that news talk shows are very inexpensive to produce.

As in the other countries we examined, Hungary finds domestic television productions — short comedies, made-for-TV movies, documentaries and the like — to be dauntingly expensive. It is much more economical to buy entertainment programming abroad. The Hungarians import about 65 percent of their entertainment programming. Of this 65 percent, about half comes from the countries comprising the former East bloc — they have a programming exchange arrangement whereby each lends programs to the others free of charge. The other 50 percent of imported programming is bought from the West. Hungarian television has extensive sports coverage.

Technology

The Press

Many of Hungary's printing facilities are antiquated. In general, they use East German and Italian equipment as well as machinery dating from the turn of the century. Often the quality of paper is not well suited to the printing equipment at hand. Newsroom technology, however, is probably the best in Eastern Europe. For the most part, this is because the hard currency that foreign investors have injected into Hungarian newspapers has enabled them to buy top-quality equipment at world market prices. Newly founded newspapers generally have started off with good equipment. *Kurir,* for instance, has Apple desktop publishing facilities and IBM accounting equipment. The state of technology at the rural regional newspapers is much more primitive.

Broadcasting

Broadcasting technology in Hungary, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, was neglected over past decades, mostly because of a lack of money. Production facilities need to be updated, particularly cameras. Much of the equipment that has accumulated over the years is incompatible with other equipment and with newly emerging broadcast technology. Hungarian television faced the question of whether and when to make the crossover from SECAM to PAL (please see the relevant discussion in the Czechoslovak section). According to Janos Horvat of MTV, what Hungarian television news needs most is mobile electronic newsgathering equipment, which would greatly improve the quality of broadcast news.

Overview of Hungarian Media:

Print

Daily Newspapers

Nepszabadsag
[People's Freedom]
A former Communist Party organ, now 41 percent owned by West German Bertelsmann group. Many Hungarians call it the best and most impartial newspaper in Hungary today.

Magyar Nemzet
[Hungarian Nation]
A former organ of the Patriotic People's Front, a grouping of nominally independent political parties that followed Communist orders. It was known in the 1980s as a liberal, sometimes daring, paper that was constantly pushing for change. Currently looking for a foreign investor, but locked in a dispute with the Hungarian government over who that investor should be.

Magyar Hirlap
[Hungarian Courier]
A former official paper of the Hungarian government. It is known as a solid, reliable reporter of the news. Now 40 percent is owned by Maxwell Communications.

Pesti Hirlap
[Pest Courier]
A new paper founded in 1990, reportedly on the verge of bankruptcy. Chatty, but informative and reliable. Privately owned.

Kurir
[Courier]
Started in 1990, it is a popular paper published in both morning and afternoon editions. Privately owned; an Austrian firm holds a 20 percent stake. Equipped with modern facilities, well-paid reporters and managers who know their business.

Esti Hirlap
[Evening Courier]
Another popular paper, but one published for years under the Communist regime. Recently acquired by Robert Maxwell.

Mai Nap
[Today]
Also a popular paper, started within the past year. Partially owned by Rupert Murdoch.

Others:
Provincial dailies, serving the local cities and the surrounding countryside. *Magyar Forum [Hungarian Forum]*, a new weekly launched by the Hungarian Democratic Forum, a winner in March's parliamentary elections, was forced to suspend publication because of poor sales.

Weeklies

Heti Vilaggazdasag
[Weekly World Economy]
A newsmagazine with an economic focus, consciously modeled on Great Britain's *Economist*. Run as a private enterprise since its founding in 1979, the magazine has a reputation for thorough, impartial and reliable reporting, both on domestic and international issues.

Reform
A new, popular magazine started in 1988. It features splashy headlines and occasionally an article or two of substance on politics. Partially owned by Rupert Murdoch.

Sport-Plusz
A recently launched sports magazine. Like *Reform* and *Mai Nap*, it is partially owned by Rupert Murdoch.

Otlet
[Idea]
Well-known business magazine.

Beszelo
[Speaker]
Political weekly, with commentary on both domestic and international events. Loosely affiliated with SZDSZ, a liberal party currently in the opposition.

Magyar Narancs
[Hungarian Orange]
Political bi-weekly, with articles on cultural affairs as well. Affiliated with FIDESZ, the League of Young Democrats, an opposition party.

Kepes 7
[Illustrated 7]
Picture magazine, with feature articles and apolitical stories.

Magyarorszag
[Hungary]
A glossy magazine with broad appeal.

Other:
Numerous magazines on culture, literature, sports, hobbies and health.

Monthlies

2000
A new publication, recently launched by *Heti Vilaggazdasag*. The focus is on intellectual and cultural issues. It is reportedly suffering from financial difficulties.

Playboy
Hungarian edition of the American magazine, begun this past year. Printed in Austria on expensive glossy paper and sold, apparently at a profit, throughout Hungary.

Other:
Cultural and political digest, reviews and the like.

Broadcasting

Television

Magyar Televizio
[Hungarian Television]
Consisting of two state-owned channels, it is broadcast mostly in the afternoons and evenings. There is a mixture of domestic and foreign programming, and news programs are consciously modeled after American news shows. It is undergoing great upheaval because of budget cuts, new directors and charges of politicization.

Nap TV
[Sun TV]
A private television station owned by the publishers of *Reform* and *Mai Nap*. It airs for only a few hours each day on Hungarian Television's frequency.

Balaton Channel
A private television station, broadcasting in German, that caters to the German summer tourists at Lake Balaton.

Radio

Magyar Radio
[Hungarian Radio]
It has several state-owned channels that broadcast news, music, and Hungarian programming almost continuously. It is overstaffed and struggling with budget cuts.

Radio Danubius
A nationwide private station originally based on Hungary's Lake Balaton. Initially broadcast in German to serve the tourist population, it is now broadcast in Hungarian.

Radio Juventus Balaton
Another private station of Lake Balaton. Started operations in 1989.

Radio Calypso
A private station in Budapest, a city in the south of Hungary.

Radio Bridge
A private station based in Budapest. Uses Voice of America material.

Other:
Numerous local radio and television studios, owned by local city or county councils, and broadcasting for only a few hours each week.

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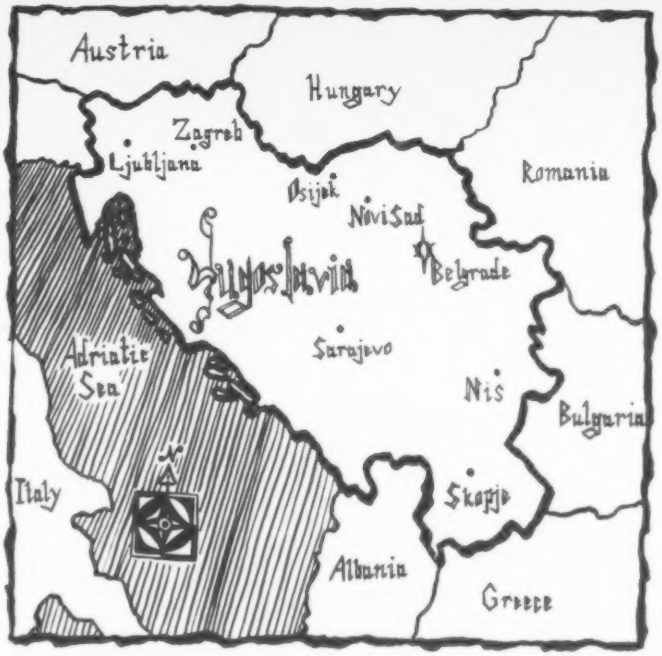
Hungary

Yugoslavia


Austria
Hungary
Zagreb
Ljubljana
Romania
Osijek
Novi Sad
Yugoslavia
Belgrade
Sarajevo
Adriatic Sea
Nis
Bulgaria
N
Italy
Skopje
Albania
Greece

Yugoslavia

Population: 22,274,000 (1980)

Area: 255,892 sq.km. (98,800 sq.mi.)

GNP: D981.667 billion (US $53.790 billion) (1979)

Literacy Rate: 80.3%

Language(s): Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, Macedonian

Currency: The dinar

Yugoslavia:

In Context

Apart from the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia is probably the most ethnically heterogeneous country in Europe. This is not a nation of the happy melting pot. The relations between the country's ethnic groups have ranged from wary cooperation to violent hatred ever since Yugoslavia was created in 1918. The southeastern corner of Europe and the Balkans had been the tinderbox of Europe throughout the later 19th century until World War I, which was ignited by the assassination of the Hapsburg Archduke Ferdinand by a Bosnian fanatic in Sarajevo.

When the victorious powers of that war convened the Paris Peace Conference in 1918, one of the main points on their agenda was to settle the convoluted political picture in southeastern Europe. They decided to fulfill the national aspiration of the South Slav populations by uniting them in a large national state — Yugoslavia.

"Yugo" means south. Southeastern Europe, however, is a quilted patchwork of ethnic groups, and inevitably large numbers of non-south Slavs, including Albanians and Hungarians, were encompassed in Yugoslavia, often to their displeasure. Furthermore, the southern Slavic groups themselves, including Serbs, Bosnians, Slovenes, Croats and Montenegrins, have shown only limited propensity to get along with one another.

Yugoslavia is a country blessed with majestic geography. On the Dalmatian coast rugged escarpments directly abut the sandy shores of the Adriatic. The beauty of the landscape and the warm climate have made Yugoslavia a favorite vacation getaway for both East and West Europeans. The flood of German marks that the tourist industry offered was one of the inducements for the Yugoslavs to open their country to Westerners when the rest of Eastern Europe was shut behind the Iron Curtain.

Under the leadership of Marshal Tito (1953-1980), Yugoslavia moved away from the Stalinist-model economy. It reduced the role of central planning, welcomed foreign investors and opened its borders to the free movement of labor. For business purposes, the dinar, Yugoslavia's currency, was even made convertible into German marks and U.S. dollars. Thus the Yugoslavs began to confront in the 1970s the sorts of economic issues that the Poles and the Czechs are only beginning to tackle today.

This receptiveness to a free market economy, coupled with Tito's open defiance of the Soviet Union and espousal of the nonalignment policy, caused Westerners to regard Yugoslavia as a special case, not quite part of the Eastern bloc. But today much of the optimism that reigned during those first years of openness to the West has evaporated.

A good deal of the Western capital that was poured into Yugoslavia was squandered on prestigious but ultimately unprofitable ventures. Economic takeoff never took place, and by the end of last year the economy was in shambles — the inflation rate soared to 1,500 percent while the standard of living continued to decline at an average of 10 percent per year.

Meanwhile, Tito, the great and stoic figure who had held heterogeneous Yugoslavia together for so many years, had passed from the scene, and the 19-member collective presidency established to take his place soon became a paragon of inept government.

Under the strain of economic decline, all the long-repressed ethnic animosities began to bubble to the surface. The Slovenians in the north are a wealthy people whose work ethic and penchant for Alpine chalets is reminiscent of the Austrians. Making up only 8 percent of the population, they began to complain that since they produced 20 percent of the GNP and 25 percent of exports, they were unfairly being asked to support the South. Slovenia more properly belongs in Western Europe, many argued, and might just as well secede from Yugoslavia and join the EEC, or perhaps form an economic union with the Austrians. Indeed, when one visits the Albanian areas of Kosovo, which reminds one of Turkey, it's hard to imagine that they belong to the same country as Slovenia.

The federal government first responded to such secessionist calls by granting Yugoslavia's six republics more political autonomy. Free elections were held in Slovenia, and the Slovenes responded by throwing out the Communists and electing a government devoted to a policy of greater autonomy, or even secession. The Republic of Croatia, Yugoslavia's second largest republic, with about 20 percent of the country's population, soon followed suit.

In Belgrade, the capital of the Serbian Republic as well as of the federal government, these attacks on Yugoslav unity were often perceived as attacks on Serbia. Comprising over 36 percent of the population, the Serbs are by far the largest ethnic group in Yugoslavia and have played a dominant role since the country's birth in 1918.

With Serbian ethnic chauvinism again on the rise, the Communist Party in Serbia ceased to stand for Communism as much as it began to stand for Serbian nationalism. Led by an able demagogue in Slobodan Milosevic, it began to divert attention from the country's economic woes to what the Serbs perceived as the arrogance and temerity of the smaller ethnic groups.

Milosevic had no problem finding chars of ethnic hostility to stoke, for even within Yugoslavia's republics the ethnic makeup is mixed. Milosevic complained that the Serbs in Kosovo were being cheated by Albanians, and that Serbs in Croatia were being mistreated by Croats.

In the republics that have removed the Communists from power, the removal represented as much a revolt against the notion of Yugoslavia itself as against Communism. This was not a Velvet Revolution inspired by the Jeffersonian ideals that moved the Czechs, but national disintegration inspired by ethnic chauvinism.

The media in Yugoslavia, once a beacon of liberalism, have largely been transformed into weapons in this struggle between regions and nationalities. *Politika*, once a highly respected weekly, has become the mouthpiece of Serb strongman Milosevic. In Kosovo, the Milosevic Serbs purged the media of ethnic Albanians. Albanian-language services on radio and television have ceased operations. In Slovenia, *Demockracija*, the most successful independent newspaper launched in Yugoslavia, takes a separatist tone. Editors at the Slovene weekly *Delo* complain that authorities in Ljubljana lean on them if their articles are not sufficiently pro-Slovene and anti-Serb. The Croatian government similarly strong-arms its press.

With this undeclared ethnic war going on, it is hardly surprising that the Yugoslavs have not been able to undertake the sweeping reforms that have characterized Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Once the favorite of Western observers, Yugoslavia has gone from being the reform trailblazer of Eastern Europe to the region's laggard.

The Task Force Report on Yugoslav Media

Legal Structure and Legal Developments

The Yugoslav media leaders we interviewed this summer were by and large uninterested in media law. This was the case in the other East European capitals we visited as well. Duska Jovanic, the editor of *Duga*, a bi-weekly political magazine, Gabor Bodis editor of *Naplo*, an independent publication from the autonomous province of Novi Sad, and Mirko Klarin, editor of *Borba*, Yugoslavia's most prestigious daily, all agreed that power relationships within Yugoslavia would be more important in determining the press's possibilities than statutes of law.

Perhaps this cynicism regarding the legal code in Eastern Europe stems from the experience of Communist rule over the last 40 years. The Communists made it abundantly clear that it is possible to have seemingly enlightened laws on the books yet use insidious and covert means to strangle freedom and openness. The East European bureaucrats excelled at setting up informal censorship mechanisms while pointing to a legal code that stated there was no formal censorship.

Press Law

The Yugoslav Constitution of 1974, which is for the most part still in effect, guarantees freedom of the press while at the same time stipulates that the press ought to serve the general political aims of the Communist Party. In practice this means that all media in Yugoslavia were controlled by an organization called the "Socialist Alliance," a tool of the Communist Party and the publisher of every legal newspaper, magazine and journal in the country.

The criminal code also included provisions which barred publication of material that might damage friendly relations between, or offend the honor of, the nation's various ethnic groups. The code contained no guarantees of freedom of information, and journalists who published pieces that the government perceived as insulting could easily be jailed. But on the whole the Yugoslav Communist government was much less consequential in stifling dissenting voices than the Czech Communist regime, for instance. As a result, the Yugoslavs grew used to a degree of press freedom under the old regime (though the degree was determined by the authorities), and the underground newspaper scene that characterized Prague never developed in Belgrade — partly because it never had to.

Although the old press laws remain on the books, they quickly become moot as Yugoslavia unravels as a society. The individual parliaments of Yugoslavia's six republics have simply taken press issues into their own hands. The Socialist Alliance has ceased to exist, and the separate parliaments have begun to act as publishers of the newspapers in their republics. Newspapers that air the views of the central government are now published by the Federal Assembly.

A new federal press law is currently circulating in draft form and may be passed into law soon. The new law will probably require the registration of new publications and provide for oversight committees as well as security and freedom of information considerations. Thus Yugoslavia is not likely to see a liberal press law of the type the neo-Jeffersonians in Prague are drafting, but it will be an improvement over the law currently in force. Some of Yugoslavia's more independent-minded republics, especially Slovenia and Croatia, are likely to dispute the validity of this new federal press law in their territories.

In Serbia, the Communists still hold the reigns of power and do not hesitate to crack down on what they regard as renegade media when they feel the situation warrants it. Jovanic, Gabor and Klarin were probably on target when they indicated that, in the absence of pressure, the Communists are not likely to draft a press law that would force them to relinquish any power to the press. In July, Serbian authorities had a falling out with journalists in the autonomous province of Vojvodina (a part of Serbia), and summarily dismissed all the editors of the state-run television, radio and press.

Broadcasting Law

Most of the broadcasting in Yugoslavia is controlled by the governments of Yugoslavia's six regional republics. Each has a separate broadcasting system over which the federal government can exert little control. The six stations are: TV-Radio Belgrade (Serbia), TV-Radio Zagreb (Croatia), TV-Radio Ljubljana (Slovenia), TV-Radio Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina), TV-Radio Skopje (Macedonia) and TV-Radio Titograd (Montenegro). TV-Radio Novi Sad (Vojvodina) and TV-Radio Pristina (Kosovo) also exist, under the general authority of Belgrade. Yugoslavia has no unified federal system akin to Czechoslovakia's television company (CST).

The Federal Secretariat for information still controls a small part of the state-run radio and television, but for the most part the governments of the republics are now the administrators of state broadcasting — another indication of the decentralizing forces at work in Yugoslavia. The Federal Secretariat still runs TANJUG, the official Yugoslav press agency. The Secretariat has recently indicated that it intends to convert its media holdings into stock corporations, a portion of whose shares may be available to foreign investors. In broad terms, Yugoslav broadcasting is not being privatized, but decentralized. The federal government seems to be trying to get out of its old broadcasting ventures.

Independent Broadcasting

Purely private and independent broadcasting initiatives have yet to touch Yugoslavia, but tentative steps are being taken to loosen the state's control over radio and television broadcasting. In some cases this means that the state is privatizing some of its broadcasting properties. In other cases the state is retaining ownership of stations but turning over the day-to-day operations to private individuals. In yet other cases the state is trying to establish some new broadcasting ventures which are to be run independently of the state. Of course, none of this is the same as having actual private ownership and constitutionally guaranteed freedom to broadcast.

Васа Чубриловић
Како је владао Тито
НИН
Црна Гора и Србија
Варијанта уједињења
Када, како - ако?

Most of the interesting broadcasting developments are centered in Belgrade. Studio B, a state-owned radio operation that has been run without subsidies and according to free market principles for the past 20 years, is now beginning to privatize. At the same time, it is planning to increase the number of channels it broadcasts from three to four. The new fourth station will broadcast mostly Western music about 12 hours per day.

Radio B-92, a Belgrade radio station owned by the Belgrade Youth Association, hopes to become a privately held stock company by September 1990. It broadcasts brief news summaries and Western music 15 hours daily, and airs American Music Television programming (MTV) the remaining nine hours. In Rijeka, a Croatian city along the coast of the Adriatic, an independent radio station is already operating and another independent station is expected to open soon in Slovenia.

In television, there are similar developments. Studio B, mentioned earlier, is planning to start its own television station in September 1990 to be called "Independent TV." Initially it will broadcast for just two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon and will reach about 2.5 million viewers who live in a 60-kilometer radius around Belgrade.

But Studio B's experience late this spring is indicative of the soft ground upon which freedom of the press is built in Yugoslavia. A party to celebrate Independent TV's first day on the air was held at the station on May 28, 1990. As the long-anticipated moment approached and Independent TV began its first broadcast, police filled the station and Independent TV was shut down — live, on the air. For about a year, Belgrade also has had TV Politika, which is more careful than Studio B in adhering to the government line.

The Federal Government's Information Offensive

This past year the federal government has begun to recognize the need to combat the rapid disintegration of the Yugoslav polity, which has both accompanied and been encouraged by the decentralization of the media. In June the federal government elaborated upon its plans for an "information offensive" — the establishment of a new federal media system. This federal system will try to counter the rampant nationalism particularly in the current media scene. It will also try to impart an all-Yugoslav perspective in several languages.

A federal television channel, Yutel, is to begin broadcasting in September 1990. It will start with one or two hours daily, and increase to six hours at the beginning of 1991. Broadcasts at first will be in Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian and Macedonian, then eventually in English. No use of Albanian, Hungarian or other Yugoslav minority languages is planned. A satellite program meant to reach Western Europe and the Middle East is being considered as well. The television station will be organized as a stock company, the majority of whose shares will be held by the federal government, though foreign investors would be welcome. In addition, an international shortwave service, something like Deutsche Welle, is planned.

In the print media, a daily newspaper is expected to begin in October. It will probably be a revamped version of *Borba*, the influential Belgrade paper known for its generally unbiased, all-Yugoslav perspective. The paper will be organized as a stock company and will publish in Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, Macedonian and English. A weekly newsmagazine and a bi-weekly semi-official review of federal policy are also in the works.

Frequency Allocation

One means by which the government can retain a measure of control over broadcasting is through frequency allocation. At present it is managed by the state-run television organizations, which in turn are controlled by the republic and federal governments. The Yugoslavs have not yet developed any independent body akin to our Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Would-be independent broadcasters encountered great difficulties in being assigned frequencies until recently, especially in Serbia. Over the course of the summer, however, the authorities seemed to become more amenable to expediting frequency allocation. There is also talk of establishing some new body in 1991 to handle frequency allocation.

Privatization of the Media

Privatization of the state-run media is proceeding rapidly. The big state publishing houses are being broken into smaller units, converted into stock companies, and transferred to employees through a system in which employees receive stock in the new corporation as part of each month's wages. This is going on at *Duga*, Studio B and B-92 right now.

"Social property," the form of ownership that characterized Yugoslavia under its system of so-called "worker self-management," is slated to phase out within the next two years, according to a recent statement by Ante Markovic, head of the federal government.

Independent Press

In addition to the political party publications that are so common in Eastern Europe, new and independent publications are beginning to proliferate in

Yugoslavia, but they are paltry in number compared to the independent press in Poland and Hungary. *Mala Privreda* (Small Economy) is a Belgrade-based business publication that has been publishing for some time. It was the first fully private publication in Yugoslavia. *Samouprava* (Self-Management), a non-aligned political magazine, has been publishing since the beginning of 1990. It is based in Novi Sad, capital of Vojvodina, and has a circulation of 12,000.

There are also plans to develop a weekly magazine that would cover both Yugoslav and world news, something like *Time* or *Newsweek*. It would be called *Vreme* (Time) and start publication in October. The people behind this venture have some of Yugoslavia's best journalists lined up already.

In contrast to Czechoslovakia, most political party newspapers in Yugoslavia appear only weekly or monthly. They are most numerous where new parties have sprung up, in places such as Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. *Demokratija*, a bi-weekly published in Belgrade by a liberal-centrist party, had published 10 issues by late July 1990 and sold 25,000 copies.

Business and Economics of the Media

Ownership

Long before Poland or Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia made tentative steps toward a more Western-style economy. Government ownership of businesses was not as absolute as in those other countries. For instance, the Yugoslavs set up their special form of "social property," which essentially implied worker self-management and that in return for their labor gave workers a share in a particular enterprise's profits. In addition, more private ownership was permitted in Yugoslavia than in other East European countries. Thus three forms of ownership currently coexist there: state ownership, social property and private ownership.

Any of the media properties owned by the Federal Secretariat are obviously state-owned. Currently the Secretariat is trying to rid the state of these properties by turning them into joint stock ventures. The governments of the regional republics are also obviously media owners, having control of the state broadcasting systems. Yutel is a new federal broadcasting initiative being planned in Belgrade that will be state-owned. *Borba*, the newspaper that has long served as the mouthpiece for the government, is also state-owned.

The publishing houses are the best examples of social property. In theory they are owned by the people who work there. Papers like *Delo* or *Politika* are theoretically the property of the workers at the publishing houses. Herein lies the complication: If *Delo* wanted to privatize or attract a foreign investor, who would sign on behalf of the publishing house and the newspaper? An editor? One of the business managers? One of the workers on the printing presses? And where would the money put up by the foreign investor go? If the newspaper takes on debt, who is responsible for paying it off? Further complications of social property surface: If the newspaper and publishing house are social property, what about the actual building where the printing goes on? What about the land where the building is located? These are all questions fundamental to the conduct of Western-style business and they have all been swept under the rug by the Yugoslavs for too long. The general pattern so far has been to privatize social property by breaking the enterprise, such as a publishing house, into smaller parts, then giving employees stock as part of each month's wages.

Private ownership is the most comprehensible form of ownership and is gradually becoming the norm in Yugoslavia. In newspapering, *Naplo* and *Samouprava* are examples of private ownership. In broadcasting, Studio B and B-92, among others, are privately owned. But even in these cases the legal boundaries are foggy. Who owns the buildings where they are located? To whom should the rent be paid? The questions are endless.

Because of this state of confusion, as well as the prohibitive laws, foreign investment in Yugoslavia's media has been negligible. Robert Maxwell has explored possibilities for investment recently, but has not made any purchases. The managers of Studio B, Milorad Roganovic, Vladan Radosavljevic, and Zoran Amar said that they knew of no foreign company planning to establish itself in Yugoslavia's electronic media.

The new draft media law allegedly carries the stipulation that foreign investment in Yugoslav media may not exceed 25 percent of an enterprise. While this is a modification of the current law, which prohibits foreign ownership of the media, the 25 percent limitation will definitely have a dampening effect on Western interest in the Yugoslav media. Federal Secretary for Information Darko Marin stated in an interview that although the current draft of the media law places the 25 percent cap on foreign ownership, this figure may be revised upward in the coming months.

Newsprint

Paper is now a market commodity in Yugoslavia, available to anyone who can pay for it. Runaway inflation has caused some problems for publishers, but no more than for any other sector of the economy. None of the newspaper people we interviewed seemed particularly concerned about newsprint supply.

Distribution

Distribution of newspapers is generally in the hands of the large state-run publishing houses that produce the papers. An effective monopoly on distribution of newspapers and magazines exists in the republics. In Serbia, the publishing houses of *Politika* and *Borba* take care of their own distribution. The following publications are all distributed by their own publishing houses: In Slovenia, *Delo;* in Croatia, *Vjesnik*; and in Montenegro, *Pobeda*. The present distribution system reinforces the insularity of the various republics. There is no distribution system to cover the whole of Yugoslavia and, as a result, no truly national newspaper.

Distribution can be used for political purposes. For example, if anti-Serbian sentiment is running high in Croatia, the Croats might refuse to distribute Borba, a Belgrade daily which is the closest thing Yugoslavia has to a national paper. Subscribing to newspapers through the mail, common in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, was never a tradition in Yugoslavia; people go to newsstands to purchase newspapers and magazines. Independent newspapers often have difficulty getting their publications into these newsstands and must often commission street vendors to hawk their product.

Readership

As in most East European countries, newspaper sales have fallen off in recent months to about 1.7 million newspapers sold daily. The primary reason for this in Yugoslavia is the astronomical inflation, but the newspaper media feel that they could definitely not charge more per copy without further undermining sales. Actual readership numbers are unknown, but it has been noted that some ambitious readers with limited funds have taken to renting newspapers. For a fee, they take a newspaper from the newsstand and return it at an appointed time.

Party newspapers in particular have been hurt by the recent decline in readership. An exception to this pattern is in pornography, which has emerged as a successful branch of independent, private-sector publishing.

Advertising

Advertising is more developed in Yugoslavia than anywhere else in Eastern Europe. Slovenia in particular has a number of advertising agencies. Managers at Studio B, the popular private radio station in Belgrade, stated in an interview that they dealt with most of their advertisers directly rather than through agencies.

Regional independence also makes "national" advertising difficult. There are no Yugoslavia-wide publications and no Yugoslavia-wide television, for instance, that would make buying space or time in national media possible. A national ad campaign requires advertisers to deal with each regional station or publication individually.

Quality of Journalism

Yugoslavia under its Communist regime enjoyed a quality of journalism that was superior to that of its East European neighbors. The government did on occasion squelch a story or silence a journalist not to their liking, but generally there was a good deal of openness in the media. Television programs, newspapers and magazines had a sharp Western look that was not easily distinguishable from that displayed by similar media in nearby Italy.

Ironically, as Communist control over the country deteriorated, and as new non-Communist governments established themselves in Slovenia and Croatia, the quality of journalism deteriorated. Once-respectable publications have turned into forums for bottled-up resentment of ethnic groups and nationalistic passions. The first casualty was objectivity, and the state of journalism has suffered heavily as a consequence.

The Serbians were perhaps the first to let nationalist blood rise. The Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic began to encourage the old Serb newspaper *Politika* to take an aggressive anti-Albanian line on Kosovo, an autonomous republic within Serbia where the Albanian population enjoyed certain special privileges. This raised the specter of Serbian chauvinism, long feared by the other ethnic groups in Yugoslavia, and when non-Communist governments came to power in Slovenia and Croatia, they responded by encouraging their respective media to foment against Serbia.

Thus in Yugoslavia today the media have a nationalistic agenda. As an example, the media in Belgrade, in Ljubjana (the capital of Slovenia) and Zagreb (the capital of Croatia) essentially will offer their three separate nationalist-inspired versions of the same event. "Journalism is not a profession in Yugoslavia; it is an instrument of public policy," said Pero Simic, an author and journalist at *Borba.*

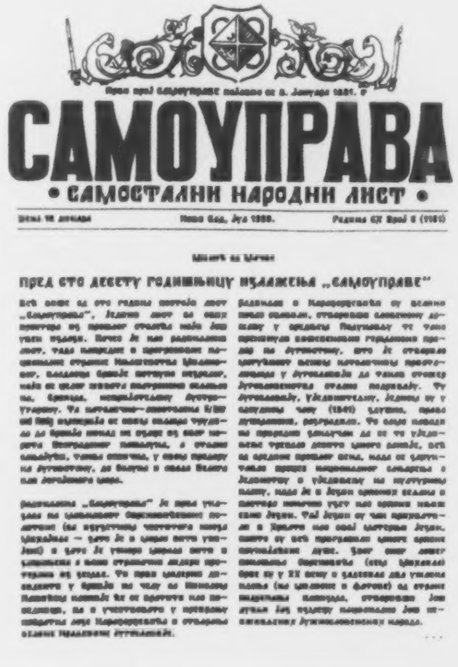
Many Yugoslav newspapers do not hesitate to publish rumor and disinformation in the service of their ethnic cause. One example is particularly telling. After U.S. Senator Robert Dole criticized Serbian policy in Kosovo, which essentially stripped Albanians of their special standing and lifted the autonomous status of the region, *Politika,* the great fighter for the Serbian cause, ran a heavy-handed article blasting Dole. The writer stated that Dole was of Albanian descent and accused his office of being in the pocket of the Albanian lobby in America. Dole's office denied all of this, but no retraction was forthcoming from *Politika.* Instead, the Serb paper pressed on. In a second article it alleged that a "compatriot" living in the United States confirmed that Dole received $1.2 million from extremist Albanians connected to the Croatian fascist movement and the narcotics mafia.

Some Yugoslav publications have thus far remained immune to these nationalist passions. *Borba* has managed to retain its objectivity, but has been penalized for it by a huge drop in readership. *Naplo* as well continues to uphold high journalistic standards, but it too has suffered from a relatively limited readership. The Belgrade newsmagazine *Demokratija* is also relatively objective in its coverage. The basic problem is not that the republican government is shoving ethnic chauvinism down the throats of Yugoslav media consumers, but that the Yugoslavs crave the chauvinism.

In broadcasting it is more difficult to find objective news reporting. The television and radio stations operated by the republics are clearly biased in their news coverage. B-92, mostly a music station with brief news summaries at the top of each hour, is the only place one can find objectivity on the airwaves.

Foreign Coverage and Specialty Journalism

The Yugoslavs are ahead of their East European neighbors in foreign coverage and specialty journalism. The relative openness of Yugoslav society to contacts with the West stimulated a healthy interest in news from abroad. *Borba*, the republican broadcasting systems and the federal broadcasting system all have some foreign correspondents.



САМОУПРАВА

• САМОСТАЛНИ НАРОДНИ ЛИСТ •

ПРЕД СТО ДЕСЕТУ ГОДИШЊИЦУ ИЗЛАЖЕЊА „САМОУПРАВЕ“

Although the state has run all the publishing houses, they do not produce the dry pro-government publications one associates with state publishing under the more oppressive former Eastern bloc governments, such as in East Germany. The Yugoslavs have a smorgasbord of specialized publications on computers, sports, cars, martial arts, psychology, arms and weapons, pets and science. Because Yugoslavia moved toward a more free market economy in the 1970s there is also a healthy supply of journalists who are able to write intelligently about that subject.

Journalism Education

The education of journalists was carried on for many years at several of Yugoslavia's universities. Many journalists, however, have no formal training, though this seems to be no particular handicap for them. A number of editors, echoing the views we heard elsewhere in Eastern Europe, expressed the opinion that journalists who graduated from schools of law, philosophy or history were better than those from schools of journalism.

Almost all those interviewed thought that the universities would be slow in changing their Marxist-Leninist style of education. Mirko Klarin, the respected editor of *Borba*, felt that while a contribution to journalism education would not be unappreciated, Western aid to the Yugoslav media could be better spent elsewhere.

Journalists Associations

Associations of journalists do exist in Yugoslavia, but have little power or prestige. This is in marked contrast to the situation in Czechoslovakia. In recent years, opposition figures in the field of journalism have united to form new associations, but these are generally local and based on ethnic affiliation. Given the strong centrifugal forces at work in Yugoslav society today, the chances of establishing or working through a journalists' association that encompasses the entire country are virtually nil. An association of newspaper publishers exists, but Klarin and Manojlo Vukotic, the chiefs at *Borba*, showed little interest in it.

Technology

The Press

In terms of technology the Yugoslav press is in good shape. The state publishing houses had more access to Western equipment because the Yugoslav currency has been convertible for some time now, allowing them to buy on the open market. Also, the more open economy permitted newspaper organizations to take out loans to purchase new equipment, something virtually unheard of in Czechoslovakia or Poland.

Print quality is generally quite crisp, and many papers are able to print in color. Weekly magazines are printed on glossy paper and in color and almost meet Western standards. Photographic reproduction remains a weak point, although the quality of photos generally puts what we saw in Czechoslovakia and Poland to shame.

Since the economy has taken a downturn, many of the government-run publications have not been able to keep their technology up to date. Fax machines, for instance, are absent from most print and broadcast newsrooms.

But some of the new independent publications are evidently able to scrape together enough cash to modernize their newsrooms. Both *Demokracija* in Slovenia and *Naplo* in Vojvodina have computerized newsrooms. *Demokracija* has three or four MacIntosh stations and desktop publishing equipment. *Naplo* in Novi Sad has several word processors and had just purchased some additional equipment, including a laser printer, when we met with its staff. The procurement of such state-of-the-art equipment was not easy, however; the two editors had to put up their private property as loan collateral. Neither of the papers is able to afford big-ticket items, such as its own printing press.

Broadcasting

The state of technology and equipment in the Yugoslav broadcasting system varies from republic to republic. The quality of equipment in Belgrade is generally good by East European standards. Most of the production equipment at Studio B dates from the 1970s. The Yugoslavs are eager to acquire ENG (Electronic News Gathering).

Overview of Yugoslav Media:

Slovene

Delo
[Work]
Largest, best Slovene-language daily. Former organ of League of Communists, but now fairly independent.

Dnevnik
[Daily]
Another Slovene-language daily based, like *Delo*, in Ljubljana, but lower quality. A Sunday edition is also published.

Vecer
[Evening]
The third Slovene-language daily. Published in Maribor. A fairly local paper.

Mladina
[Youth]
Weekly political magazine, concentrating on domestic issues. Formerly owned by the Communist Youth Organization but in August 1990, privatization was started. Close to the Liberal Party, i.e., oppositional.

Demokracija
[Democracy]
Privately-owned weekly, published in tabloid size, started January 1990. Criticized by many as too close to the Slovenian Democratic Union, which is a member of the governing coaltion, DEMOS.

Europa
[Europe]
A weekly affiliated with the Communists, who are now in opposition.

Manager
A monthly business magazine. Chatty.

Gospodarski vestnik
[Economic Reporter]
A weekly business magazine, published by the *Delo* publishing group.

IN
Privately-owned, weekly business bulletin, published in English and other languages. Targeted at foreigners in Yugoslavia.

Delo X
[Work X]
A new weekly, with a popular, trendy focus that *Delo* launched on August 27.

Gorenjski Glas
[Voice of Upper Carniola]
A regional weekly, published in Kranj.

Dolenjski List
[Paper of Lower Carniola]
A regional weekly, published in Novo Mesto.

Croatia

Vjesnik
[Reporter]
The largest, best Croat daily. Former organ of the League of Communists. Published in Zagreb.

Slobodna Dalmatija
[Free Dalmatia]
Croat daily targeted at the coastal areas published in Split.

Voce del Popolo
[Voice of the People]
Italian-language paper published in Rijeka.

DANAS
[Today]
Weekly political magazine, well-known throughout Yugoslavia. Part of the *Vjesnik* publishing group.

START
Bi-weekly magazine with interviews, pictures and a little politics. Also part

of *Vjesnik*. Printed in Verona, Italy because domestic printing is more expensive and less reliable.

Bosnia-Hercegovina

Oslobodenje
[Liberation]
Daily, published in Sarajevo.

Serbia

Politika
Belgrade daily, supposedly controlled by Communist/Socialist Slobodan Milosevic and his group.

Borba
[Struggle]
Belgrade daily, former organ of League of Communists, but now widely recognized as one of the most impartial newspapers in Yugoslavia. It uses both scripts but has a small circulation.

Vecernje Novosti
[Evening News]
Belgrade daily, content on the light side.

Duga
Belgrade political weekly, known as very nationalist.

NIN
Belgrade political weekly.

Politika, The International Weekly
English-language political review published by *Politika* (see above).

Demokratija
[Democracy]
Bi-weekly organ of one of Serbia's new political parties. Liberal and well regarded.

Velika Srbija
[Great Serbia]
Monthly organ of the Serbian Cetnik movement. Extremely nationalist.

Srpska Rec
[Serbian Word]
Montly, independent magazine, nationalist. (Most of the new parties have some sort of publication, and there are countless non-political publications as well.)

Vojvodina

Magyar Szo
[Hungarian Word]
Hungarian-language daily, former organ of League of Communists.

Samouprava
[Self-Management]
Serbian monthly. Privately owned, independent and nationalist.

Naplo
[Diary]
Hungarian-language political and cultural weekly. Privately owned, independent and liberal.

Kosovo-Metohiija

Rilindja
Only Albanian-language daily in Yugoslavia. By decision of the Serbian Parliament, *Rilindja's* publication was suspended as of August 8, 1990.

Montenegro

Pobjeda
[Victory]
Daily, published in the Macedonian language in Skopje.

Vecer
[Evening]
Daily, published in the Macedonian language in Skopje.

Broadcasting

Television

Regional Stations
There are eight — one for each of the six republics of Yugoslavia 2nd one each for the two autonomous regions, Vojvodina and Kosovo. No pan-Yugoslav channel exists yet. There are, however, plans to create one called "Yutel."

Studio B
An independent station based in Belgrade.

B-92-TV
An independent station based in Belgrade.

Other:
There is some independent broadcasting based in Split.

Radio

Regional Stations
These are organized in the same way as the television stations.

B-92-Radio
An independent station based in Belgrade, which plays mostly music.

Other:
Smaller independent stations are based in Rijeka and Slovenia. The Hersant group plans to link up independent stations.

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Nenad Briski
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Task Force Conclusions and Recommendations

Virtually all Westerners who have looked seriously (or even superficially) at the needs of the emerging free press in Central and Eastern Europe come to the same general conclusion: The needs for resources of all kinds are urgent. They range from the basics — like newsprint, copy machines and tape recorders — to big-ticket items like presses, broadcast equipment and computers. In addition, there are harder to price but clearly expensive education and training needs, both managerial and editorial.

Many such inventories have appeared, and while well intentioned they often fail to sort out priorities or to identify the most profound needs. It is important to consider what activities in Eastern Europe ought to be undertaken by philanthropies as opposed to private enterprise and government agencies. Put simply, who should do what?

It is well to remember that, in the long run, the market economy media will function on the basis of supply and demand. There may be exceptions, of course, like state-run broadcasting, a feature common throughout Europe, both East and West. In many of the reports and assessments referred to earlier, there is an image of Central and Eastern Europe as somewhat disconnected beggar nations, ready for any kind of handout from the West. This is an inaccurate picture as one learns by looking closely at the region. The Czech leadership, for example, has asked not for money but for Western expertise and technical assistance. And a number of large West European entrepreneurs have hardly waited to start joint ventures and are looking for more. Seven regional dailies in Hungary, for example, went from Communist Party control to the roster of the German publishing giant Axel Springer overnight, without any nurturing by governments or foundations.

And, even in the most turbulent and fragile environments, Western media entrepreneurs have explored options. For example, Rupert Murdoch traveled by helicopter to central Bucharest in the midst of the Romanian revolution in December 1989. Whether this is desirable or not is yet another question, but the reality is that many of the needs of East European media will eventually be addressed by the private sector, whose capabilities far exceed those of philanthropists or even governments.

With regard to resources, one might argue of course, that everything is needed and needed now, and that it does not make any difference who does what. But such a haphazard approach has the pitfalls of leading to both a fragmentation of efforts and undue concentration on helping just a few high-profile media ventures. In summer 1990, for instance, three Western media experts were ensconced in Budapest's Forum Hotel waiting to meet and advise a manager from Hungarian Television, but none of the them knew of the others' missions.

Important early efforts by several foundations and government agencies helped keep alive a dissident press in the underground and contributed to the frail new media systems that exist today; however, many of the media that appeared in the past year are not likely to survive in the free market economies that are beginning to take root in Eastern Europe. And indeed in competitive economies it is natural that some media ventures should go under.

But in this difficult period of transition from command economies to market economies, many worthy media ventures struggling to stay above water merit Western support. To develop mature press and broadcasting systems in these countries would, of course, require billions of dollars. Since such huge sums are not likely to be forthcoming, the limited Western aid available, including that from governments and foundations, ought to be allotted with great care to those institutions and individuals that can benefit most and who it is thought will, in turn, do the most for their respective countries and societies.

Thus there ought to be considerable thought to the question of who should do what and what is the most appropriate activity for each of the entities capable of helping foster a free and independent press in the region. A broadly based strategic plan is urgently needed if the limited Western aid is going to be directed to the most worthy recipients rather than being squandered on hundreds or even thousands of ephemeral activities and ventures.

Of course there is the very difficult problem that we have discussed in various sections of this report for each contributing organization to determine for itself what is appropriate and worthy aid. So each must ask, when is a risk worth taking and what end does it serve? While it is unlikely that there can ever be any kind of rigorous coordination among the various organizations interested in aid to Eastern Europe, some shared information will be helpful in giving each a more intelligent basis for decision-making and program development. Given the limited resources, we believe there ought to be a broad division of labor, possibly refined through discussions at conferences and meetings such as those convened by UNESCO, the Center for Foreign Journalists, the Nieman Foundation, the World Press Freedom Committee, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, or the Gannett Foundation and the Gannett Center for Media Studies, among others. For purposes of discussion, we suggest consideration of the following division of labor, by those entities and institutions interested in and able to help:

Governments might provide assistance to East European state broadcasting organizations that are seeking to foster pluralism within the context of state broadcasting. They can offer advice to East Europeans on problems such as spectrum allocation and regulatory issues. The East Europeans will, after all, have to develop in just a few short years a body of FCC-like broadcasting regulations that a country like the United States has accumulated over decades. Exchanges of crucial information in areas like these often require government sanction. Exchange programs and training programs such as those administered by the United States Information Agency show early signs of success and ought to be continued.

Businesses can act with enlightened self-interest by promoting joint ventures with East European media organizations. With a small capital investment, businesses can establish an important position in the East European media market. In this arena, the West Europeans have far outpaced their American counterparts. It is also possible in the United States and in several other countries for businesses to accrue tax benefits by donating equipment, new and used, as well as other material. Media businesses or suppliers and vendors like computer companies can work directly with East European media organizations and develop collaborative relationships that are likely to become profit-making in the future.

Industry and professional groups are best suited to offer business assessment and advice as well as consultation. Organizations and associations of publishers, editors, broadcasters, public relations personnel and advertisers can offer invaluable professional education and training to their counterparts in Eastern Europe.

Universities and training programs can help in developing education programs and curricula and in drafting textbooks. Faculty and student exchanges will foster mutual enrichment. Typically, Western educational institutions have a great deal to offer in the way of expertise in seeking funding from foundations, businesses and the government.

Foundations and other philanthropic groups ought to direct their energies to the fostering of institutions and to specific independent media ventures that will help anchor freedom of the press and broadcasting in Eastern Europe. In some instances, foundations like the Gannett Foundation might administer their own programs, while in other cases it might be more efficient and appropriate simply to give grants or contracts for specific projects.

Strategies for Aid

Broadly speaking, efforts by American foundations to help foster free and independent media systems in Eastern Europe can be grouped into three categories: immediate-term aid projects, medium-term aid projects, and long-term aid projects.

Immediate-term aid would seek to have an impact within one year. It might include donations of vitally needed equipment, donations of newsprint, or financial support. Medium-term aid efforts would center on brief training programs, in management, for example, or on sending Western experts to media organizations in Eastern Europe to provide advice on matters such as advertising. These sorts of medium-term aid efforts would likely show real results in a matter of one to three years. Long-term efforts would focus on journalism and communication education or efforts to foster the development of institutional entities, such as advertising, market research and other aspects of a market-driven media system. One could expect to wait perhaps 10 years before such projects would begin to bear fruit in terms of improved quality of media in Eastern Europe. Ideally, a well-balanced program would have a mixture of immediate-, medium- and long-term efforts.

The appropriateness of each type of aid hinges on the specific media conditions in each country. As our study has suggested, while Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia have much in common, the health of the media varies in each of these countries, and consequently the form of Western aid must vary as well.

There is also the question of just whom Western foundations ought to support. If the goal is to help an independent media system, that is to say a media system whose entities are not under the editorial control of the government or political parties, then it is appropriate to single out those based on private ownership and dependent on commercial revenues for support. It is not always easy to find such private and independent media ventures in Eastern Europe, with its long tradition of advocacy press and state-run broadcasting. In Poland, for instance, the vast majority of newspapers have aligned themselves with the main political factions; in Yugoslavia, much of the press is devoted to advancing the causes of various ethnic groups.

Here two interrelated questions also arise: First, are there other models of ownership (in addition to government and commercial that might be considered, such as church-related) that might emerge or be developed? Second, with regard to legal restraints, what ownership models will be permitted by the new governments of the region? Against this backdrop, and especially relevant for U.S. foundations, is a question about what "legally" can be funded in Eastern Europe. A U.S. foundation may not support commercial media ventures in the United States since it uses tax-exempt money. The Internal Revenue Service rules for Eastern Europe are yet to be written and will challenge many established assumptions in foundation law. Through official statements by the president and secretary of state, as well as in programs enacted by the Congress, support for a free press in Eastern Europe seems to have emerged as a national priority, so it is assumed that tax-exempt foundations will be allowed broader latitude than is typically the case. Still, this has not been resolved and will no doubt be an issue in the immediate future.

High on any priority list for the region are private and independent daily newspapers, available on a nationwide basis, which can provide reliable and objective news reporting. Yet such independent national dailies are scarce, if not nonexistent in Eastern Europe. They are needed because as the governments of these countries attempt to consolidate the gains of 1989 and cope with the economic morass they inherited, often by undertaking economic austerity programs, the people will need to be objectively informed in order to come to terms with what promises to be a difficult road ahead. The need for independent, reliable information is clear, yet its source is, at present, in short supply.

It is not the job of Western foundations to create independent national dailies in the countries of Eastern Europe. Initiative and ingenuity are not in short supply there, but money and know-how are. Western assistance could be valuable in helping local independent newspapers to become the independent national dailies these countries sorely need.

In the short term, financial aid could buoy such newspapers during the difficult transition from a command to a market economy. Western foundations, however, are not in the business of subsidizing media ventures and such financial assistance must be very carefully considered. Equipment is another need that Western foundations could help fulfill in the short term to improve the quality of the newspaper as a product. In Poland, where the transition from command economy to market economy has been especially rocky and practically all newspaper operations are financially strapped, this sort of aid might be most appropriate.

In the intermediate term, advice from Western experts on business management could help turn an inefficiently run newspaper enterprise into a tight ship and eventually into a handsome profit-maker. Here, too, such aid must be carefully considered. In order for a consultant to be worthwhile, the newspaper enterprise must be sufficiently large and sophisticated and the economic environment a free market one. Hungary, having the most advanced market economy, would perhaps benefit most from this sort of aid, although the need for training in business management was roundly expressed in every country we visited.

In the long term, journalism education could help provide a national daily with a supply of journalists who are able to write clearly and concisely about issues and who understand the difference between reportage and editorializing.

University journalism education will require years, perhaps decades, to establish itself as an integral link in the media scene in these countries because of the fact that journalism as an academic field is not widely respected in Eastern Europe and because university journalism programs in the past have been ideologically tainted. Training programs for practicing journalists are undoubtedly better suited to improve the quality of journalism in the immediate future.

To date little attention has been given to the idea of adapting some Western institutions, like public relations and publicity, to the societies of Eastern Europe. To explain: Several of the government leaders we met in our fact-finding mission thought that the only way to efficiently communicate with their people was by controlling state broadcasting and by having their own national daily. Few had considered the notion of a government information office or a staff of professional public information officers who might get their message across in creative ways without actually owning the means of communication. This may be a long time coming in the region, but ought to be considered, perhaps through some Western aid effort.

Independent newspapers not only must play a central role in informing and educating the polities of Eastern Europe about the changes their countries are undergoing, they must also bring broader global events home to their readers. For decades East Europeans were ill-informed about developments outside of the communist world. Now it is important that foreign coverage be improved in order to deprovincialize the readership in Eastern Europe. Yet almost no independent newspapers, and often not even state-owned papers and broadcasting organizations, can afford to have a corps of correspondents stationed abroad.

Western foundations might help remedy this situation in two ways. First, they could provide worthy publications with the major wire services — AP, UPI and Reuters — for a limited period. East Europeans would grow accustomed to the concise, quality reportage from abroad and might well opt to pay for the service themselves after it was no longer donated. Second, Western foundations could bring East European correspondents to the United States for year-long fellowships, provide them with the necessary facilities (whether for print or broadcast journalism), and allow them to carry on reporting for their publication or television or radio station back in Eastern Europe.

If it is possible to establish in print media a practice of supporting only non-party, independent and privately owned ventures, this will be very difficult to do in the field of broadcasting, at least for the foreseeable future. All the major broadcasting systems in Eastern Europe are state-owned and are likely to remain that way, although there is talk of at least partially privatizing some of these enterprises.

It is probably not the place for a Western foundation to provide East European state broadcasting systems with short term aid, i.e., equipment and money. These are state enterprises and it should be up to the states to allot sufficient funds from their budgets to provide their broadcasting systems with adequate equipment.

In all of the countries we visited the legal environment for private broadcasting requires considerable clarification. Until this happens private broadcasting is not likely to flourish. Where private broadcasting ventures already exist, such as in Hungary, there are plenty of foreign investors prepared to put up the hard currency that would enable them to purchase equipment. The question of foreign investment in broadcast properties is yet another matter that remains to be ironed out. If the necessary legal environment for independent broadcasting is established, but foreign investors are unwelcome, then it might be the place of foundations, together with the government, to provide independent broadcasters with start-up funding.

Another approach to fostering independent broadcasting is to "seed" independent production companies. These companies could receive Western financial help, equipment and managerial advice and build up a body of programming. Then they could rent air time on state-owned channels, amass a following and capital until it is economically possible to launch an independent channel.

There is much to be said for supporting independent broadcasting ventures rather than the press. Broadcasting's costs may be greater but so is its impact. While much of the most interesting political press in Eastern Europe does not reach the rural population because of distribution problems, broadcasting enters the homes of almost all East Europeans. Furthermore, it sidesteps all the complicated problems that independent newspapers face.

As the region's economies move away from the state-planned model, state broadcasting will have to survive on fewer state subsidies and become economically self-sufficient. In this endeavor, they need the same sorts of managerial assistance that the press does — accounting, personnel, advertising, and so on.

A foundation has also to address how thinly it wishes to spread its resources. One approach would be to select a handful of print and broadcasting ventures as models and devote extensive resources to them. A large amount of Western aid could bring a single newspaper, for instance, up to Western standards, and this newspaper could serve as a model for other papers and publications in the country. Alternatively, a foundation could give more numerous smaller grants. These, arguably, would help more media enterprises, but it is possible that a small amount of aid would be insufficient to make a significant impact.

Foundations will have to confront the question of how they will choose recipients for support. Eastern Europe is a fractious place, politically and ethnically, and large donations to a select few will certainly raise allegations of favoritism or insidious motives from those who do not receive support. In Yugoslavia, special care is required. A large donation to a Slovenian paper like *Demokracija*, for example, would bring immediate accusations from Serbs that the foundation was trying to foster separatism and tear Yugoslavia apart. Similarly in Czechoslovakia, care must be taken not to aid the Czechs at the exclusion of the Slovaks. In Poland, foundations must avoid the appearance of favoring media allied with the ROAD faction, now associated with the government in power, as opposed to those close to the Center Alliance, which is linked with Lech Walesa. The appearance of an even hand is crucially important if a foundation is to maintain its credibility.

It is also important to consider the aid efforts of other groups in formulating projects. The East European media need a mixture of training, education and material support. If efforts are focused on the training of journalists, Eastern Europe may wind up with a supply of good journalists but with few financially healthy newspapers to employ them. On the other hand, massive material aid may be wasted as mediocre media ventures draw up long laundry lists of equipment and technology needs. The tendency will be to ask for the top-shelf technology, even when less advanced equipment might be more practical.

Recommendations of the Gannett Foundation Task Force

What follows here are some recommendations for aid to the press of the region, stretching across the immediate, mid-term and long-term categories, and directed generally to all those who wish to be part of this enterprise, recognizing that aspects of these efforts are now under way and need, in all cases, careful coordination.

1. *Development of a clearinghouse — including an on-line data base as well as occasional directories and other publications —that would keep track of ongoing aid efforts, with the purpose coordinating projects, preventing duplication of efforts or overconcentration on a few areas.*

2. *Commitment to a broad-based effort to help the media of the region learn to work in a market economy, including creative seminars on the transition from a command economy, and coping with such matters as displacement of people and negotiating with foreign investors.*

3. *Assessment and assistance with legal/constitutional matters, including not only press and broadcast law issues, but the emergence of contract and property laws that do not inhibit a free press.*

4. *Support for business and management experts and special consultants to conduct seminars at sites in Eastern Europe, or to work at specific publishing or broadcast organizations for a period of weeks.*

5. *Creation of a training center in Eastern Europe that would run educational programs for practicing journalists as well as occasional programs for journalism students. This might be done in collaboration with another institution.*

6. *Set up scholarships and fellowships and short-term study programs for journalists and broadcasters in the United States. There could also be special programs for managers dealing with cost analysis, advertising, public relations, personnel, and so on.*

7. *Establish a program of awards and prizes for journalistic excellence as well as business-side achievements.*

8. *Donate money and newsroom equipment to independent dailies that show great promise and demonstrate special need.*

9. *Assist, both professionally and financially, East European journalists and media people who are trying to establish coherent and effective professional organizations, either on a national or regional basis.*

10. *Pay for time-limited subscriptions to international wire services such as AP, UPI and Reuters for a pool of publications for specified amount of time.*

11. *Assist the indigenous news services (typically government operations) in improving their operations and in moving toward privatization or quasi-commercial operations.*

12. *Fund research projects to study the current and emerging media system of the region. This research would be action-oriented rather than strictly scholarly.*

13. *Provide East European journalists, either in print or broadcast media, with one-year internships in the United States. These correspondents would write articles or produce broadcast news pieces to be used by one or more East European publications or broadcast channels.*

14. *Help journalism faculties at East European universities develop new curricula, both through on-the-scene assistance and short-term study grants in the U.S. and elsewhere.*

15. *Underwrite the development or translation of basic journalism and communication texts to be used in the journalism schools. Help schools to develop a corpus of literature on journalism and communication, linked to that already in existence.*

16. *Nurture, support and encourage the student press across the region by contact with Western student press organizations, workshops, conferences and other ventures.*

17. *Encourage technical consultancies at newspaper newsrooms and television stations to assess precisely what types of new equipment and technology are best suited to that particular media venture.*

18. *Offer technical assistance and limited, short-term business support to outstanding independent production houses.*

19. *Purchase radio and television programming for East European programming archives. This would help fill up expanding broadcast schedules and help educate the populace, which has had little access to programming about science, culture and other areas.*

20. *Establish a newsprint fund that could lend either money for newsprint or give newsprint itself to deserving newspapers in times of economic distress.*

21. *Convene an annual conference of media and communications leaders from Eastern Europe and United States that would focus on the effectiveness of Western aid efforts.*

22. *Consider a U.S.-European assessment of press freedom on a regular basis to chart achievements and problems.*

23. *Develop a regular program to help governments and other entities of the new societies communicate more effectively with the public.*

24. *Assist in discussions of and mechanisms for fostering the public expression of opinion, either through media feedback mechanisms, public opinion survey organizations, or other outlets for societies where such channels have been lacking.*

25. *Conduct a broad-based communication effort to keep Western sources conversant with the present status and results of various aid efforts. This should be done in a way that educates the West about the East European nations and their rich cultures and talented people.*

These recommendations, both structural and programmatic, are offered as a basis for a more coherent program of aid to a region of the world that can greatly benefit from it. We and others who have visited the region concur that it is one of the most exciting places on the globe today for the emergence of freedom and the reinvention of a new press system courageously created by the revolutions of 1989 and 1990. While the press and media of the region may benefit from Western aid and ingenuity at the present, we believe that such aid will also contribute mightily to global communication and public understanding over the long term.

Select Bibliography

In developing this report, we read and consulted hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles as well as various reports and other documents tracking the media of Eastern and Central Europe, in particular those countries we visited. We assembled detailed files on the region and on seven countries most often regarded as part of the territory of the former Eastern bloc.

In those files we put clippings from media sources most useful to us, among them the *New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Financial Times* and *The Economist.* Naturally the communication industry trade press was also extremely helpful in this task.

We are indebted as well to several background reports from Radio Free Europe's files in Munich, where one of the authors of this study spent several days doing research.

There were scores of telephone calls to American and other sources involved in East European aid efforts of various kinds, some of them in government, some in nonprofit organizations and still others in the private sector.

Listed here below are several essential works, including reports, books and articles that were especially pertinent to our own work:

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A Two-Way Street:

What Americans Can Learn From Eastern Europe

Some American observers and aid efforts are approaching Central and Eastern Europe with good intentions, but with a patronizing manner that suggests a one-way street where we engage in what is essentially a charitable effort.

The question, "What can we learn from the enterprise?" is less often addressed. As East Europeans refurbish and reinvent their media system, they are traveling over territory that we have long regarded as settled, but really is not. For example, our own regime of press freedom, enshrined in the simple command of the First Amendment, is augmented by volumes of communication law including libel, privacy, copyright, broadcast regulation and more. It is hardly settled, but is instead the subject of continuous debate and legal action.

We ourselves have what has been called a "paradox of press freedom" wherein freedom and regulation abut each other, and sometimes government intervention is essential to resolve disputes about the primacy of rights.

The market economy under which U.S. media operate, including large media organizations the ownership of which has become concentrated in steadily fewer hands, coexists with much smaller ones. Our system also includes both commercial and public broadcasting, two markedly different approaches to mass media. The U.S. model is clearly mixed and often the subject of spirited debate and legal action, hardly an accepted cookie-cutter for others to follow without subtle analysis.

When East Europeans look at "American-style" media they see serious, dignified publications on newsstands alongside others that are cheap and sleazy, so the overall quality of U.S. media is hardly a settled issue either. Undeniably the system is diverse, offering both reliable information and well-reasoned opinion together with rumor-mongering sensationalism. Still, one clear feature of U.S. media as opposed to those in Eastern Europe is a tradition of separating news and information from pure opinion as represented in editorials and columns. This feature is, perhaps, one that East Europeans would do well to emulate.

The education and training of journalists in the United States is arguably the best in the world, with a substantial system of journalism schools as well as midcareer and continuing education programs for journalists and other communicators; however a majority of U.S. media personnel are not graduates of any journalism program, but are instead college graduates (some with advanced degrees) who simply chose a career in the media. Though well-ensconced in higher education, American journalism schools are still not universally accepted by editors and other media decision-makers, who often denigrate their programs and decry their graduates.

In the midst of these conflicting signals, as Americans assist Eastern Europe in fashioning a new media system we will necessarily confront our own frailties and inconsistencies. We may end up learning more from the experience than we impart. If so, the East Europeans can patronize us in return.

What Others Are Doing:

Inventory of Western Projects to Aid East European Media

Various U.S. and European organizations, groups and initiatives are involved in efforts to aid the media in Central and Eastern Europe. They range from governments and government agencies to trade associations, training centers, universities and foundations. This is a selected inventory of some of those efforts. These are most of the key ones we encountered, although there are no doubt other worthy efforts that could be included.

1. *United States Information Agency and Magazine Publishers of America Internship Program.*

A group of 16 magazine professionals from Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania visited the United States from June 3 to August 16, 1990. During their stay, they were assigned to a participating magazine and learned about American journalism through on-the-job experience. The program was created by the United States Information Agency's (USIA) Private Sector Magazine and Print Committee. The costs of the internships are covered by participating magazine publishers, and the USIA pays for transportation costs as part of President Bush's Initiative in Eastern Europe Program. Contact: Walter Raymond, 202-619-6091.

2. *USIA-Center for Foreign Journalists Internships.*

The USIA and the Center for Foreign Journalists in Reston, Virginia, sponsored six-month media internships for East European journalists working in both print and broadcast media.

3. *USIA-sponsored Media Workshops in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.*

In summer 1990, Richard Schwarzlose of Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism traveled with a team in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and assessed the needs of new independent newspapers there and the possibilities for journalism training.

4. *USIA-sponsored Media Workshops in Poland.*

In November 1989, Jerome Aumente, journalism professor at Rutgers University, traveled to Warsaw, Poznan and Kracow to prepare a needs-assessment study for the USIA. This spring, a team including Aumente and several American journalists conducted two-day workshops for print and broadcast media in 10 Polish cities. The workshops sought to have an impact on the provincial press and to lend practical advice to the Poles. The U.S. Embassy and the Polish Journalists Association coordinated the workshops.

5. *USIA-sponsored Study of Journalism Education in Hungary.*

In May 1990, Ray Hiebert, journalism professor at the University of Maryland, traveled to Hungary to assess the possibility of fostering journalism education there. His report recommended that the USIA establish a Hungarian-American Journalism Center in conjunction with Janus Pannonius University in Pecs.

6. *USIA-sponsored Broadcast Training in Hungary.*

In autumn 1990, USIA sent a team of three broadcasting experts, led by Robert Mulholland of Northwestern's Medill School of

Journalism, to Hungary for two weeks to advise Hungary's broadcast leaders and assess the nation's broadcast needs. They made concrete managerial recommendations to facilitate Hungarian Television's transition from a Stalinist-style ministry to a television system that can compete in a free market. Later this year six Hungarians from different sectors of the broadcasting system will travel to the United States for training on management, technical and business issues.

7. *American Society of Newspaper Editors Internships to East European Journalists.*

The American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) conducts an internship program that brings 12 foreign editors to the United States for a six-week period. The editors have orientation sessions in Boston and Washington and work with American newspapers for about a month. Traditionally the internships have gone to editors from Third World countries; this year, five of the 12 are going to East Europeans. The Soros Foundation and ASNE members are providing funding for the program. ASNE is also sponsoring a fact-finding mission of American editors to Eastern Europe in October 1990. Diana Reynolds at Tufts University administers the program. Contact: Lee Stinnett, 703-620-4557.

8. *National Forum Foundation Internships.*

The National Forum Foundation supported East Europe's underground press monetarily for some years before the revolutions of 1989. It now conducts a program providing East Europeans year-long internships in the United States to study governmental procedure, business and the media. This year about 20 media people from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary will work at major American broadcasting and publishing companies. Next year the program will be expanded to include all of Eastern Europe and will provide for about 40 interns. Some of the funding has come from the Rockefeller Foundation, the German Marshall Fund, the Soros Foundation and Olin. Contact: Jim Denton, 202-543-3515.

9. *Voice of America Programs.*

The Voice of America (VOA) is a part of the USIA and thus its programs are run in conjunction with the USIA's. The VOA has had a few programs that brought East European journalists to Washington. One program was for members of the oppositional press in Romania, one was for Polish journalists, primarily radio journalists. They also held seminars on the press and democracy in Romania in May 1990. They are planning a television management program for October in Washington and will invite television people from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. There are also plans to develop a program that would affiliate East European journalists with a journalism school at an American university for a year of study. The VOA's budget hinges on congressional allocations, so the availability of funds to carry out these projects is uncertain. The VOA has recently opened a news bureau in Warsaw. Contact: Rojene Waite, 202-619-0983.

10. *Charter 77 Programs.*

In early 1990, Charter 77 received $1 million from George Soros to help establish an active Charter 77 branch in Prague. About half of this money went to the independent press in Czechoslovakia. Many small papers received donations of money and equipment; loans were made to *Lidovy Novine*; and some magazines are funded by Charter 77. Charter 77 is funding two Czech journalists participating in ASNE's internship. They are also funding a circulation seminar at *Lidovy Novine* headed by Johnston Mitchell of the *International Herald Tribune.* An East-West journalists conference in Prague in July 1990 was sponsored by Charter 77. Charter 77 typically does not fund projects but facilitates them instead, since it has good contacts in Czechoslovakia. Contact: Wendy Luers, 212-397-5563.

11. *German Marshall Fund Programs.*

The German Marshall Fund primarily funds programs which are administered by other organizations. They helped fund the National Forum Foundation's internship program; they have provided scholarships to Polish and East German journalists for study at American universities; and they will also sponsor a program on environmental journalism in the United States to which East European journalists will be invited. The Marshall Memorial Fellowship Program is administered by the German Marshall Fund. It provides young journalists and politicians from Poland and Hungary with six-week internships in the United States to acquaint them with American institutions. The Marshall Fund has sponsored two programs in Poland: a training program at Polish Radio in which BBC managers gave instruction in management techniques (this will be followed up by training programs at some of the regional stations); and an effort led by the Polish Citizen's Foundation to set up new local newspapers in the Polish provinces. Contact: Debbie Harting, 202-745-3950.

12. *Cox Center for Mass Communication Training at the University of Georgia.*

In April 1990, Al Hester and Roland Page of the Cox Center conducted a three-day workshop on practical journalism techniques at Charles University in Prague. The workshop was jointly sponsored the Cox Center, Charles University and USIS Prague (James Chrisinger). The workshops were conducted in English and attended by roughly 60 Czechs (mostly students; the turnout of professional Czech journalists was disappointing). Investigative journalism was one particular area of focus at the workshops. The Cox Center would like to conduct more such workshops in Czechoslovakia, bring Czech students to the University of Georgia, and perhaps publish a basic journalism text in Czech for use at Charles University. Contact: Al Hester, 404-542-5023.

13. *International Federation of Newspaper Publishers.*

In conjunction with the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers is sponsoring a conference in Budapest in September 1990 on the business aspects of newspaper publishing. The Federation has also served as intermediary in negotiating the donation of a Zurich newspaper's used press to *Lidove Noviny* in Prague.

14. *Soros Foundation.*

Prior to the democratization of 1989, the Soros Foundation played a substantial role in promoting underground press activities in Eastern Europe. Supported by a New York based financier of Hungarian descent, George Soros, the foundation also seeded the *Stefan Bathory Foundation* (Poland), the Open Society Fund (Bulgaria), and has contributed to the Czech *Charter 77*. The foundations provided direct financial assistance, donations of equipment, and employment opportunities for activists in the anti-government press in the form of domestic and foreign scholarships. Among the samizdat publications assisted by various branches of the foundation were the Czechoslovak *Lidove Noviny*, the Bulgarian *Demokratzia*, and the Hungarian *Beszelo*. With the political conditions for a liberal press achieved in each of these countries, the Soros Foundation decided to move out of the business of providing help to East European newspapers. Contact: Eva Zarandi or Elizabeth Lorant, 212-757-8560.

15. *Rockefeller Brothers Fund.*

The main thrust of the Rockefeller Brothers' aid efforts has been in managerial training, not specifically for media managers, and environmental issues. The Rockefeller Brothers are a grants-making institution but do not administer specific programs. They have donated money to the Central and East European Publishing Project in Oxford, England, which is devoted to strengthening publishing operation in Eastern Europe and translating East European books and journals for the West. It has made grants to Charter 77 and the National Forum Foundation. It helped fund the East-West Journalists Conference in Prague in July 1990. Contact: Bill Moody, 212-373-4200.

16. *Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe.*

The Institute has received grants from the National Endowment for Democracy of about a quarter million dollars. Most of this money was given in small grants to independent Polish publications, more periodicals than newspapers. Ads were placed in Polish papers and a flood of publications applied for the money. A slightly larger grant was given to

Respekt in Prague. Currently the Institute is preparing to give out another round of grants. Contact: Astrid Benedek, 212-677-5801.

17. *International Media Fund.*

This is an organization formed at the instigation of Secretary of State James Baker. It intends to serve as a clearinghouse that would advise private organizations on how to best become involved in aiding the East European media. Its focus will be on getting American broadcasters and broadcasting organizations to provide seed money to help independent broadcasters get started in Eastern Europe. Congress has set aside some money for the Fund, and the USIA donated several hundred thousand dollars to get it on its feet. Though it has envisioned itself merely as a grants clearinghouse, the Fund will probably be a grants-making institution. It hopes that its own grants will be matched by those from the private sector. The Independent Media Fund has also examined the possibility of sending printing presses and lighter equipment to East European publishing ventures. Its first board meeting will take place in October. Contact: Marvin Stone, 202-296-9787.

18. *Freedom House.*

Freedom House is one of the first American institutions to get involved in aiding independent media in Eastern Europe. It funnelled aid to many publications when they were still underground, and consequently is well-connected. This past year it has given about $1.2 million in aid. Most of Freedom House's money comes from the National Endowment for Democracy, John Owen Foundation, the Bradley Foundation and private contributors. This year, about 200 tons of newsprint were shipped to *Demokratzia* in Bulgaria, *Romania Libera* in Romania and *Lidove Noviny* in Poland. They provided *Lidove Noviny* with some PC's and *Romania Liberia* with a printing press. Money grants were given to the journal *Geopolitica* in Bulgaria and *Beszelo* in Hungary. They are doing fund raising for *Romania Libera* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* in Warsaw. They also support small journals in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. They have funded some Soviet publications through the Soviet Union for Independent Journalists. Freedom House has also helped place some East European journalists in media schools in the United States. Contact: Bruce McColm, 212-473-9691.

19. *National Endowment for Democracy.*

During 1990, the NED has funded numerous projects undertaken by Freedom House to aid the independent media in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania (see above). It provided money for the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe to establish a Fund for Free Press and Publishing in Poland, and to enable formerly underground publishers there to transfer their activities to a legal and above-ground mode of operation. It also gave money to the Polish Free Trade Union Institute, which has backed Solidarity newspapers. It funded the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and its Republican counterpart to set up a communications training program in Hungary. It donated money to Northeastern University to set up an independent television production facility in Romania. Contact: Karl Gersham, 202-293-9072.

20. *Reuters Training Programs.*

Reuters is bringing 12 East European editors and reporters to London for an intensive two-week course on editing and production techniques. Two more such training programs will be held this year. Contact: Sidney Weiland.

21. *World Press Freedom Committee Projects.*

The World Press Freedom Committee has produced a 160-page *Handbook for Journalists of Central and Eastern Europe* (currently being translated into the vernacular languages) that provides basic information on everything from business management to newsroom techniques to reporting methods. Ron Koven prepared a needs-assessment report covering East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The Committee, which operates exclusively on private funding, also leads a consortium of free press agencies seeking to coordinate their aid efforts to Eastern Europe. It has pledged support for a regional journalism training center to be located in Warsaw, and also plans to send an expert on newspaper operations to consult with editors in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Recent activities and plans for the near future include the dissemination of business textbooks for use in Polish schools, the coordination of free U.S. newspaper subscriptions for East European press and media organizations, and a plan to provide free AP wire service to as many local news organizations as possible. The W.P.F.C. will also convene the first major conference of Western organizations that are active in Eastern Europe, starting October 10th, 1990. Contact: Dana Bullen, 703-648-1000.

22. *Printing Press Donations.*

One of the major problems in establishing a vigorous newspaper industry in Eastern Europe is the dearth of modern printing equipment or the monopoly of such equipment in the formerly centralized Communist press. In the light of this situation, several efforts have been made to furnish upstart newspaper organizations with up-to-date printing presses. *Le Monde* offered one of its presses from its headquarters in France to *Gazeta Wyborcza;* the campaign to raise the cost of moving the equipment was headed by the WPFC, via FIEJ. *Lidove Noviny* was similarly offered a printing press, from Switzerland, with the proviso that it raise substantial funds for moving and installation. Thus far, *Lidove Noviny* continues to print its editions on the presses of the former Communist daily.

23. *Internews.*

Internews operates under the auspices of Internews Network, Inc., a nonprofit corporation intent on fostering a critical coverage of global issues through the innovative use of television media. Their East Europe Program includes a survey of existing independent radio and TV broadcasters to be made available to possible providers of aid in the U.S.; the creation of translated and freely distributed "how-to" video packages on radio and TV broadcasting; and legal advocacy for small broadcasters to ensure their future survival in the region. Internews will also co-sponsor a workshop on independent media to be held in Moscow next year, as well as supporting the attendance of East European broadcasters at other relevant upcoming meetings and conferences. Contact: Evelyn Messinger, 212-966-4141.

24. *Myers Foundation of Australia.*

The Myers Foundation is among the largest Australian foundations. In contrast to the Americans, who have emphasized aiding independent media, the Myers Foundation has emphasized democratizing the public media. They have sent teams to Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to advise the state media on how to diversify their products, and they have brought media leaders from those countries to Australia for training seminars.

25. *A.I.D.*

A.I.D. has over the year made about $1.35 million in grants to various institutions devoted to fostering the independent media in Eastern Europe. For the most part, A.I.D. is a grant-making institution, although it does occasionally administer some programs of its own. This year, $350,000 went to USIA for its training programs; and $1 million to the National Endowment for Democracy, which in turn divided this sum between *Romania Libera*, the Independent Media Fund (start-up money) and two other organizations, Dialogue and Internews. Some money also went to the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe, to the National Forum Foundation and to Northeastern University for its radio programs. Contact: Jerry Heymann, 202-647-9229.

26. *Newspaper Management Center.*

Based at Northwestern University, the Center is becoming involved in East European media partly stemming from its earlier experience with the independent South American press, where it had to deal with many similar problems. The Center recently helped organize a series of management seminars and workshops for mid- to upper level press executives in Budapest, in conjunction with the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers and the American Newspaper Association. Northwestern University is planning to deepen its relations with the East European press and media. Its President, Arnold Webber, is a member of a roundtable of the heads of the top 40 American universities and corporations, which is currently devising assistance programs for Hungary and Poland. Contact: John Lavine, 708-491-4900.

27. *Trans-Atlantic Dialogue on European Broadcasting.*

Fifty senior media executives from Europe and North America banded together in 1982 in this informal group in order to concentrate people from different backgrounds with many skills — from telecommunications to investment banking — that are relevant to broadcasting. The group advocates national de-regulation accompanied by partial European re-regulation, and has recently moved toward involvement in Eastern Europe both in offering advice as well as in undertaking specific missions. Plans for the latter include participation in the drafting of the laws and structure of broadcasting; proposals for a coordinated Central European Regional Newtwork; the coordination of media-related seminars, databases, and feasibility studies; as well as informal advice in evaluating the various Western proposals made to East European broadcasting organizations. Contact: David Webster, 202-393-7100.

28. *The Alerdinck Journalism Fellowship Program.*

Sponsored by the International Press Institute, the Alerdinck Foundation, and the Center for War, Peace, and News Media, this program sent four U.S. press professionals to Eastern Europe (one to Hungary, one to Poland, and two to the Soviet Union). Each of the fellows spent six weeks working in selected news organizations. In the future, the program is looking for opportunities to sponsor coming to the United States as well. Contact: Judie Wedd (Center for War, Peace and News Media, New York University), 212-998-7960.

29. *UNESCO.*

At its informal East-West Press Meeting in Paris (February 27-28, 1990), UNESCO responded to urgent calls from international media organizations to find ways to aid emergent media organization in Eastern Europe. The meeting was attended by 90 media professionals, giving the East European experts an opportunity to voice their needs, and the Western media an opportunity to respond with direct offers. UNESCO pledged $20,000 and assistance in arranging for additional start-up costs for a Centre for Communications for Eastern and Central Europe. UNESCO will also participate in the selection of eight East European journalists for $3,000 scholarships offered by the Florida-based Poynter Institute In the future, UNESCO plans to act as a clearinghouse to coordinate training and assistance programs. Contact: Ms. Dean Clark, Information Officer, 212-963-1234.

Eastern Europe and the Media:

Some Views of Insiders

By Everette E. Dennis

Presented at the East-West Journalists Conference, Prague, Czechoslovakia, July 5, 1990. The conference was jointly sponsored by the Center for Foreign Journalists, Reston, Virginia; and the Nieman Foundation, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Compiled from a questionnaire developed at the Gannett Center for Media Studies, Columbia University, New York City.

Introduction

Although journalists of Central and Eastern Europe are only beginning to experiment with an independent press after decades of party and state control, their views reflect considerable understanding of complex communication issues and policy choices that create a proper climate for press freedom and other forms of freedom of expression.

In a survey conducted at the East-West Journalists Conference in Prague, Czechoslovakia, July 1-6, 1990, some 18 journalists of the former Eastern bloc were asked to complete a questionnaire covering legal, economic and managerial issues, as well as an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the U.S. press. Thirteen journalists from seven nations — Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union — participated in the inventory of views.

Legal and Constitutional Issues

Since the relationship between media and government is the most important indicator and guarantor of press freedom, the journalists were asked to assess the extent of government control of print and broadcast media in their respective countries.

When asked to what extent their government regulated the printed press, most (7) answered "to a limited degree," such as newspaper registration or a government press office, or "very little" (4), with only one answering "to a great extent" and one saying "very little."

The same question applied to broadcasting yielded a quite different picture with "extensive formal control" (5) leading the pack, followed by "limited quasi-governmental control" (4), "very little" (3) and "don't know" (1).

Most (7) said print and broadcasting operate under different legal and constitutional regimes with some dissent (4), and two gave other answers, including party control of printing houses and distribution centers, which, while not formally a governmental activity, has much the same controlling effect.

Asked whether there was a need for a specific press law in their country a strong majority (10) said "yes," while one said "no" and two urged adoption of a comprehensive communication law governing telephone, postal services, telecommunications and the printed press. Virtually all indicated that press laws were in a state of flux in their countries and in need of codification.

Just what kind of press law would the journalists prefer? A press code with provisions for libel, privacy and other issues was strongly preferred, with 10 votes. Other choices were: a specific constitutional provision like the U.S. First Amendment (3); a code listing the rights and duties of journalists (4); licensing of journalists (2); and, again, a comprehensive communication law (2).

As for specific provisions of such a law, respondents unanimously agreed that the rights to gather, process (or edit) and disseminate information should all receive legal definition and protection. This varies greatly from the U.S. experience, where there are few enumerated rights to gather or process information, but a large body of law on dissemination.

The ideal relationship between the press and government? Most (10) asserted that the press should be independent of government and political parties, which represents a major break with previous conditions in their countries. Three persons said the press should be partly independent of parties and partly controlled by parties, reflecting the fact that many papers in Eastern and Central Europe are either party organs or are loosely associated with parties.

Taking a different view of electronic media, which one respondent said "ought to be owned by the people and serve the people," the journalists were asked to indicate who or what groups made decisions regarding television programming. Votes were as follows: government (9); political parties (2); an independent commission (2); market forces (1); the audience or public (1); and parliament (1). Did they regard this arrangement as adequate and permanent? The majority (8) said yes, while two said no and three gave no opinion.

Economic Issues

With multiple votes for a variety of economic and fiscal choices, the following rankings emerged:

On the present economic basis for media in their country:

1. Government subsidies (8);
2. Newsstand sales revenues, subscriptions and user fees (7);
3. Subsidies from political parties (5);
4. Advertising (5).

On the ideal economic structure for media ownership:

1. Mixed government-private ownership (9);
2. Private ownership (7);
3. Party ownership (2).

There were no votes for strict government ownership.

On condition for private or quasi-private ownership:

1. Large publishing companies in the country that own many newspapers and other properties (7);
2. Independent ownership by families, local groups or investors (6);
3. Foreign owners and investors (2);
4. No preference (1).

Asked specifically about the presence of independent television or radio stations in their country, five said there were such stations, five said there weren't, and the remainder did not know.

Needs of News Organizations

In a media system that is moving from a command economy to a market economy and that will require considerable restructuring and reorientation, the journalists were asked to indicate the most pressing business/managerial needs. Their rankings:

1. Production and printing issues (11);
2. Circulation development (7);
3. Advertising sales (2);
4. General business operations (2);
5. Accounting (1).

For most East European print journalists, one of the most urgent needs is paper, which is in short supply, either due to lack of local production or to extensive exporting of paper to gain hard currency, which has the effect of cutting off much-needed local supplies. Ten of the 13 respondents said their country's newsprint supply was not adequate. Three said it was, at least in their own experience. The prospects for improvement in the paper supply? Most said "poor" (10), one said "don't know," and the others failed to answer.

Distribution issues also were frequently mentioned by the journalists who explained that, in most of the countries they represented, either the state or the party controls or plays a large part in distributing newspapers, magazines and other periodicals and books. When asked how newspapers are presently distributed, this was the result:

1. Government kiosks (11);
2. Subscriptions (9);
3. Newsstand sales (6).

What to do about the present situation? Suggestions included privatization of distribution center; more effective use of the post office; various cooperative, quasi-governmental systems; and even a few votes for home delivery.

As for the mechanical, production and supply needs most urgently felt by the journalists, they were ranked as follows:

1. Paper (7);
2. Electronic equipment, including computers (5);
3. Printing equipment (3);
4. Color printing capability (1).

Broadcasters mentioned conversion equipment, computer capabilities and various technical equipment, including cameras, control room equipment and other items.

Education and Training Issues

After decades of practicing Soviet-style journalism, and with the entry into journalistic jobs of many persons with no training or previous media experience, education and training needs were singled out as vital and important by the respondents.

Most Eastern bloc journalists were the products of a formal system of journalism education of the Marxist-Leninist propaganda style. When asked how most journalists prepared for careers, these were the responses:

1. Journalism education at the university level (9);
2. General university education, no special journalism training (3);
3. Trade and training schools sponsored by the press or journalists' unions (3).

Others mentioned party schools and on-the-job training.

As for the most urgent needs for journalistic skills or techniques, investigative reporting led the field. The rankings:

1. Investigative reporting (12);
2. Newsgathering techniques (7);
3. News writing (7);
4. News editing (6);
5. Graphic design and makeup (5);
6. Interviewing (4).

Since the first indicators of change in the media in the countries represented was a more frank coverage of government and political dissent, the nature and definition of news have undergone enormous changes. The journalists both in the survey and in conference presentations exhibited a hunger for specialized help in covering topics once taboo or largely unfamiliar. Again, as ranked by expressed need:

1. Business and economic coverage (11);
2. Coverage of government (7);
3. International affairs (6);
4. Science, medicine and environment (2);
5. Other (modern legislative bodies) (1).

The journalists had a hard time assessing the ratio between hard news and opinion material, with most saying that pure opinion or analysis accounted for more than 60 percent of all media content. Others mentioned some modest amount of pure information, such as weather information and sports scores.

How is news currently covered by the news media in these countries? Mostly through beats, such as government agencies (6) or general thematic subject areas (the military, arts, etc.) (6), and general assignment (3).

By what journalistic standards and practices, informal or formal, do news organizations operate? Most said they had "general understandings about ethical rules and practices" (11), while three said there were none. No one indicated the existence of a licensing examination for journalists or a press council or citizen review organizations. In written comments, the journalists said that what is called "ethics" in the West is a major problem for the emerging media of the East, which often have no standards for verifying information or checking facts.

Rumors, some said, are often printed without corroboration. One journalist expressed worry about the runaway nature of the new freedom, where "responsibility and simple accuracy are simply ignored."

Most (10) of the journalist-respondents acknowledged once taboo topics now needing consistent, systematic coverage, while two said there were none and one did not respond. The once taboo topics:

- secret police;
- the army;
- human rights;
- the environment;
- political criticism;
- ethnic conflicts;
- real relations with East bloc countries;
- the economy.

One journalist simply said, "practically everything."

Finally, after this self-assessment, the journalists were invited to assess the news media of the United States. While some said they were unfamiliar and did not read or watch on a regular basis, most were keenly aware of U.S. media and pronounced it "very good" or "good." Few used the word "excellent." Overall ratings were relatively high and specific comments indicated attitudes about strengths and shortcomings of American newspapers, newsmagazines and television news.

High on the list of U.S. media attributes were investigative reporting; accuracy; attention to local news; an orientation toward everyday life and ordinary people; financial news coverage; overall independence of media from government; freedom to touch any subject; and high technical standards, including color printing and photojournalism.

As for deficiencies, there were complaints about the superficiality of American news coverage; the lack of detailed analysis that one finds in some leading European newspapers or on the BBC; a low-level understanding of remote areas, including Central and Eastern Europe; too many pictures and too much splashy color; an overly commercial approach to news; too simplistic coverage generally; a monotonous tone and what one journalist called "a self-imposed primitiveness."

Although the questionnaire was administered on the first day of the conference, many of the views expressed here were reinforced during the week and seemed to reflect accurately the temperature and mood of the press in this region of the world, at least as these conferees see it.

Summary

The study reported here is only a glimpse into some aspects of a greatly changing and still fragile press system in the several countries of this region and of the Soviet Union. Some of these countries have newly established democratic regimes, while others have governments led by renamed Communist parties. In almost all instances, distribution and printing are still controlled by the government, although in some instances the present government is considerably more benevolent than the previous one. What the responses to the questionnaires and the many comments written on them indicate is the need both for solving practical problems like the newsprint shortage as well as for giving long-term attention to economic structures and governmental rules.

Papers and newscasts, the journalists asserted, live day-to-day, gathering news, finding the resources — both money and paper — to print, coping with onerous distribution rules and a sluggish bureaucracy, and scores of other practical problems. Yet there is also a strong recognition that this will not be possible either in the short of long run unless there is freedom of expression enshrined in legal/constitutional guarantees and made possible either by a market economy or by a greatly modified command economy.

If, for American journalists, the definition of news, the nature of ownership, the relationship between press and government, sometimes seem theoretical and distant, this certainly is not the case for their colleagues in the press in the territory once marked off by the Cold War.

Finally, it should be clearly noted that between the lines of the questionnaire and in separate notes, the journalists who took part in this exercise wanted it known that each country is different, with different traditions, cultures, ethnic composition and even press traditions.

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